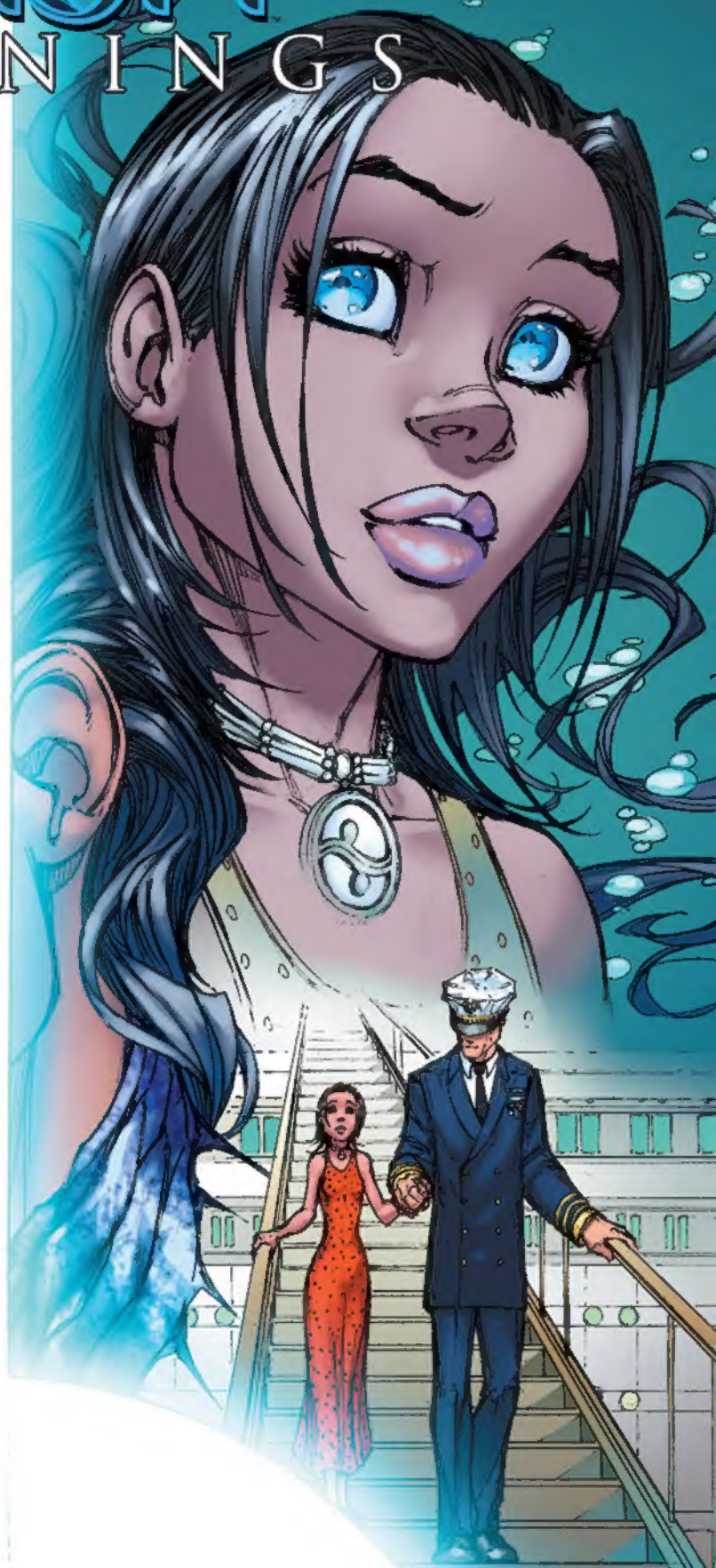




VOL. 2

COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM BEGINNINGS



MICHAEL
TURNER

Plot



Fathom Created by
Michael Turner

VOLUME TWO
Beginnings

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
story

KOI TURNBULL
pencils

JASON GORDER
inks

CHRISTINA STRAIN
colors

DREAMER DESIGN
letters

Digital Editors: FRANK MASTROMAURO, VINCE HERNANDEZ Design and Production: JOSH REED, MARK ROSLAN, PETER STEIGERWALD Lettering font designed by: DREAMER DESIGN

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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM™ BEGINNINGS Vol. 2 Issue 1

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JULY 1964

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT *YOU*, BUT MY EYES ARE STILL MESSED UP FROM THAT BRIGHT FLASH OF LIGHT.

I HEARD THE SHIP'S DIRECTOR SAY IT COULD HAVE BEEN A BURST OF FLASH LIGHTNING FROM SOME EXTREMELY LOW-LYING CLOUDS.

THERE *WEREN'T* ANY CLOUDS. THE SKIES HAVE BEEN CLEAR ALL DAY.

WE ALL SAW THEM MILITARY JETS BUZZING BY US JUST BEFORE THE FLASH. YOU CAN'T TELL ME IT DIDN'T HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED.

WOULDN'T SURPRISE ME IF WE ALL HAD RADIATION POISONING BY NOW. ALL I KNOW IS EVER SINCE IT HAPPENED, I FEEL A BIT QUEASY, LIKE THINGS JUST AIN'T THE SAME.

YEAH, LOOKS LIKE *SOMETHING'S* GOING ON.

I'M REALLY SORRY TO TROUBLE YOU LIKE THIS, BUT MY CAPTAIN IS SURROUNDED BY A MOB OF OVERZEALOUS PASSENGERS RIGHT NOW, AND GIVEN WHAT HAS HAPPENED, I FIGURED YOU WERE THE PERSON TO FIND.

IT COMES WITH THE UNIFORM; DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT. I JUST HOPE I CAN HELP.

ME TOO, SIR...



...FOR HER
SAKE.

I DON'T
UNDERSTAND.

NEITHER DO I. WE
CHECKED THE MANIFEST,
AND ALL THE UNDERAGE
PASSENGERS HAVE BEEN
ACCOUNTED FOR.

STOWAWAY?

NOT LIKELY, WE DO
ROUTINE SWEEPS OF
THE SHIP ONCE WE LEAVE
ANY PORT. I CONDUCTED THE
SEARCH MYSELF AFTER WE
LEFT PUERTO VALLARTA.





THAT DAY ON THE SHIP SEEMS LIKE A LIFETIME AGO.

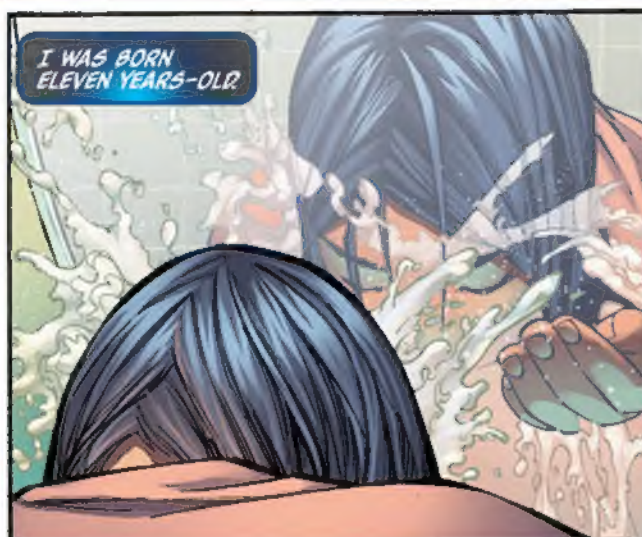


HOW'S IT GOING IN THERE?



IT WAS MY FIRST MEMORY.

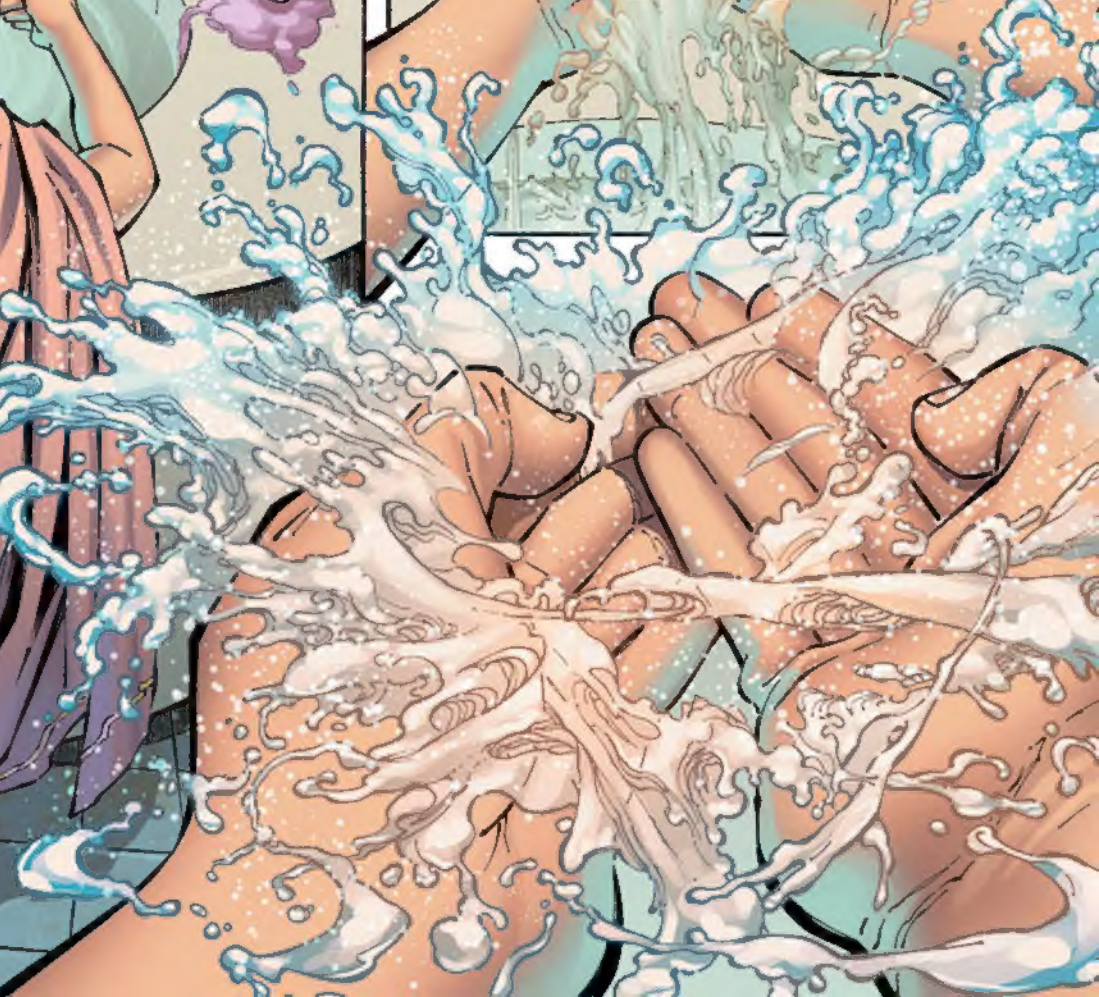
MY LIFE BEGAN THERE.



I WAS BORN ELEVEN YEARS-OLD



WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES, ALL I SEE IS WHAT I TRIED TO FORGET...



АААААААА!

I GREW UP ONE OF THE BLUE,
A RACE OF BEINGS FROM THE
DEPTHS OF THE OCEAN.

IF IT WASN'T FOR THE
SUDDEN MANIFESTATION
OF MY POWERS, MY
BROTHER AND I
PROBABLY WOULD
HAVE BEEN NEXT.

WE TRIED TO ESCAPE,
BUT KILLIAN WAS NOT
EASILY DETERRER A
FACT I WOULD LATER
LEARN ALL OVER AGAIN.

THE LAST THING I REMEMBER
BEFORE FINDING MYSELF ABOARD
THE PARADISE WAS THE LOOK ON MY
BROTHER'S FACE WHEN THE LIGHT HIT.

AT LEAST, I DID UNTIL
THE DAY MY PARENTS
DIED AT THE HANDS OF
ONE OF THEIR OWN...

KILLIAN.

EVERYTHING WENT SCREWY. I COULD
STILL SEE HIM AWASH IN THE WHITE
LIGHT, BUT IT WAS AS IF HE WAS MILES
AWAY FROM ME. I WAS OKAY, BUT I
COULD SEE THE ANGUISH IN HIS EYES
AND HEAR IT IN HIS SCREAMS.

IN THE NEXT
MOMENT, HE WAS
GONE AND I WAS...

...LOST.

NO.

MY NAME IS
ASPEN... MY NAME
IS ASPEN...

IT'S OKAY, ASPEN.
IT'S OKAY. I WON'T LET
ANYTHING HAPPEN TO
YOU, ASPEN. YOU HEAR ME?
I WON'T LET ANYTHING
HAPPEN TO YOU.

IN RUNNING FROM KILLIAN, I
WAS FREED FROM THE BURDEN
OF MY PAST AND GIVEN A
FRESH START— A NEW LIFE...
A NEW WORLD... A NEW FATHER.

I DON'T REGRET REMEMBERING
WHAT HAPPENED TO ME, BUT I
CANNOT HELP FEELING ENVILOUS OF
THAT LITTLE GIRL ON THE SHIP AND
THE LIFE SHE COULD HAVE LED.

THE BEGINNING.

ASPEN
Vol. 2

#0

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MICHAEL
TURNER

Michael Turner

Fathom Created by
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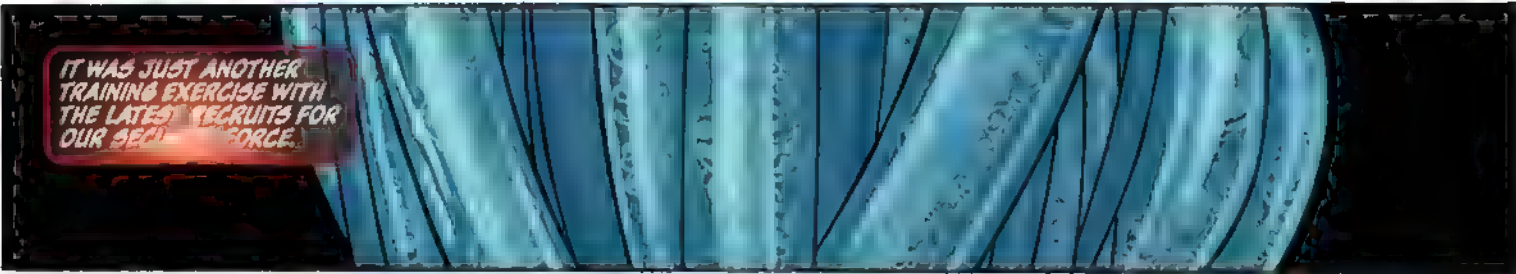
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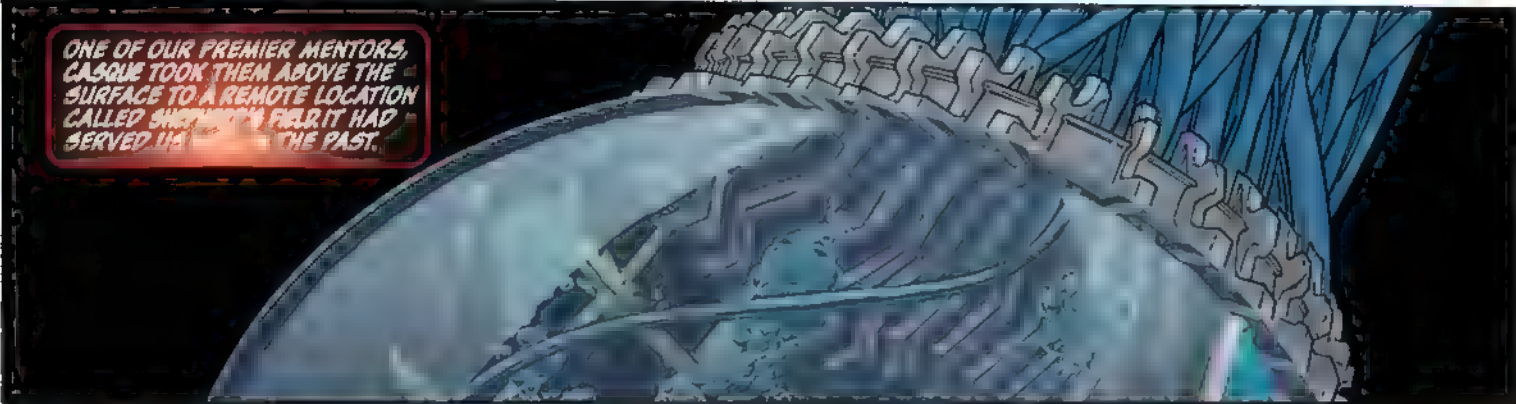
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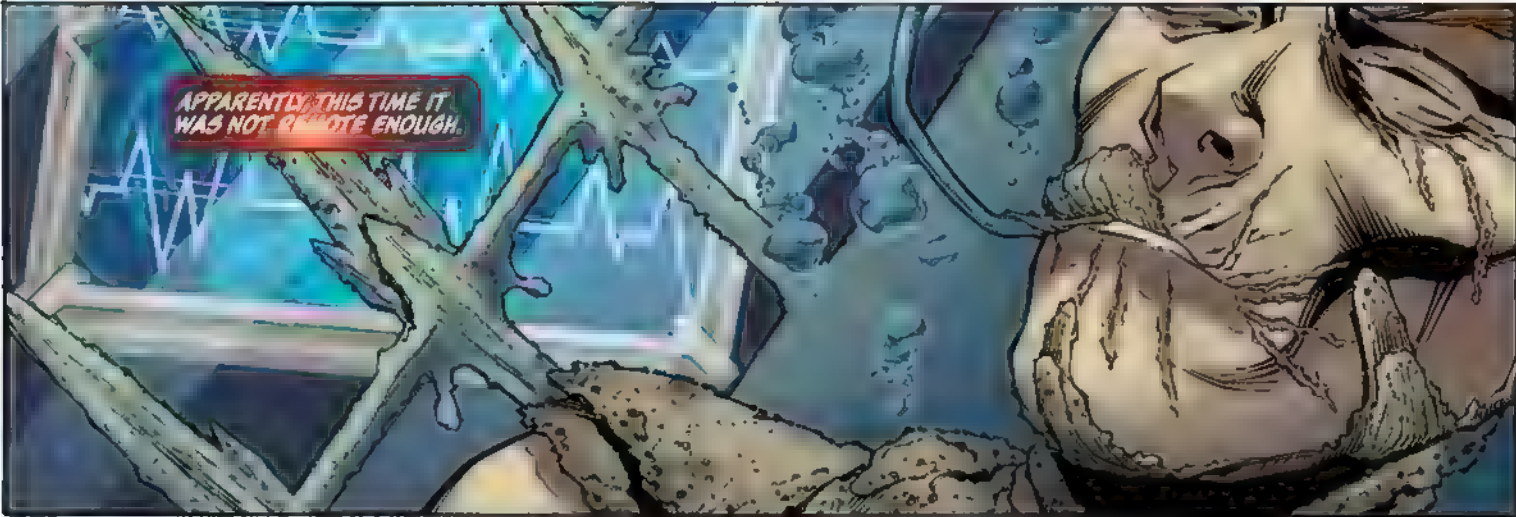
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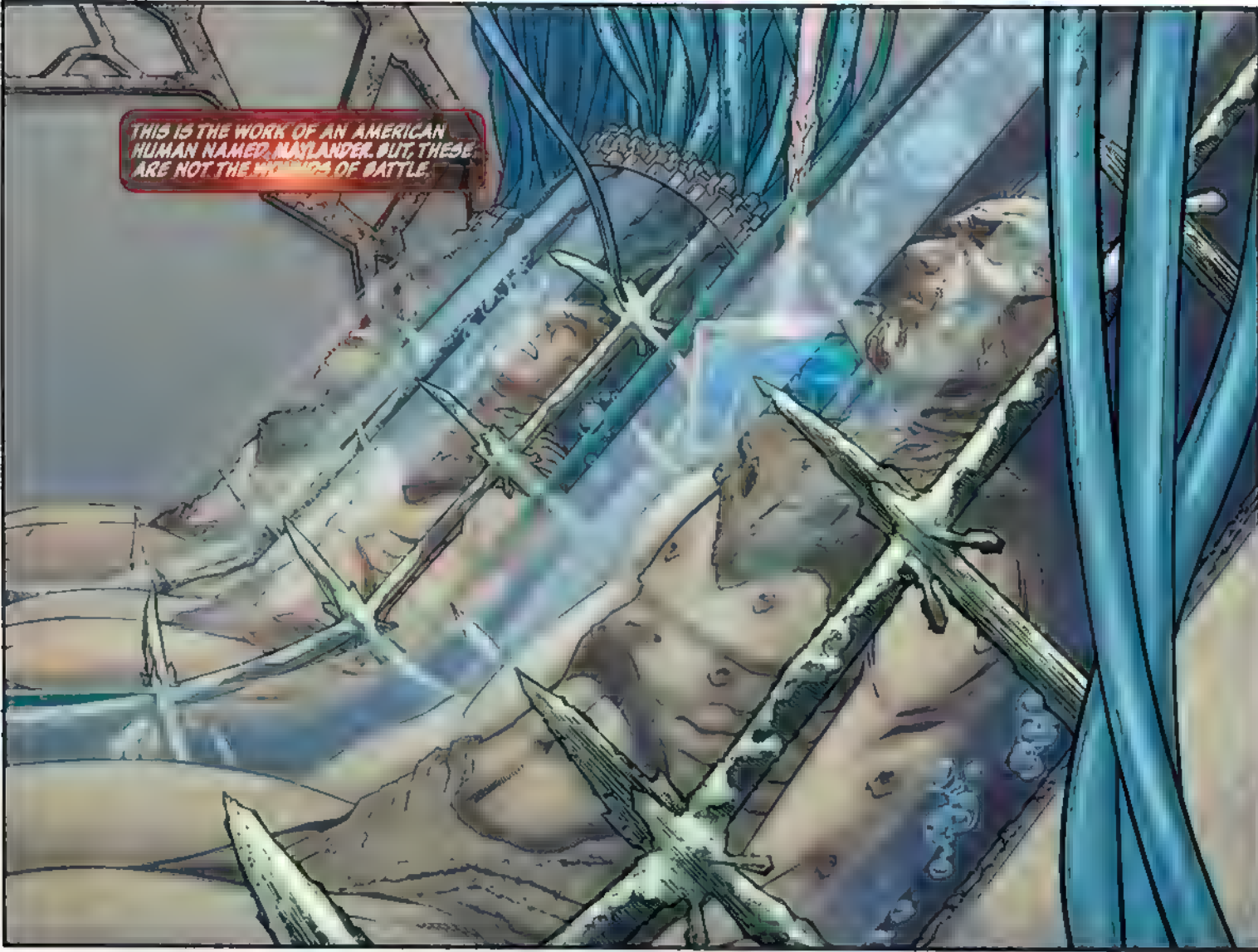
IT WAS JUST ANOTHER
TRAINING EXERCISE WITH
THE LATEST RECRUITS FOR
OUR SPECIAL FORCE.



ONE OF OUR PREMIER MENTORS,
CASQUE TOOK THEM ABOVE THE
SURFACE TO A REMOTE LOCATION
CALLED SHERWOOD. HE FELT IT HAD
SERVED US WELL IN THE PAST.



APPARENTLY THIS TIME IT
WAS NOT REMOTE ENOUGH.



THIS IS THE WORK OF AN AMERICAN
HUMAN NAMED MAYLANDER. BUT THESE
ARE NOT THE WOUNDS OF BATTLE.



THESE ARE THE
MARKINGS OF
TORN

AFTER BEING SUBDUED
BY FORCE, THEY WERE
TRANSPORTED TO A
MOUNTAIN BASE FOR
EXPERIMENTATION. ALL OF
THEM WERE CASQUE.

AND WHILE WE WERE ABLE
TO RESCUE MANY OF THE
SOLDIERS, CASQUE WAS NOT
AS LUCKY. HE WAS FREED
FROM ONE CAPTOR ONLY TO
FALL INTO THE HANDS OF
ANOTHER. NARQUESES, THE
VERY MAN WHO LED THE
RESCUE, WAS THE WHO
OBTAINED CASQUE
ON HIS OWN.

THEY WERE DAWN!
WANTED FOR
MURDER

KIANI CONTINUED AFTER
HIM, FOLLOWING HER
HEART, AND LEAVING ME
TO CARE FOR THE REST.

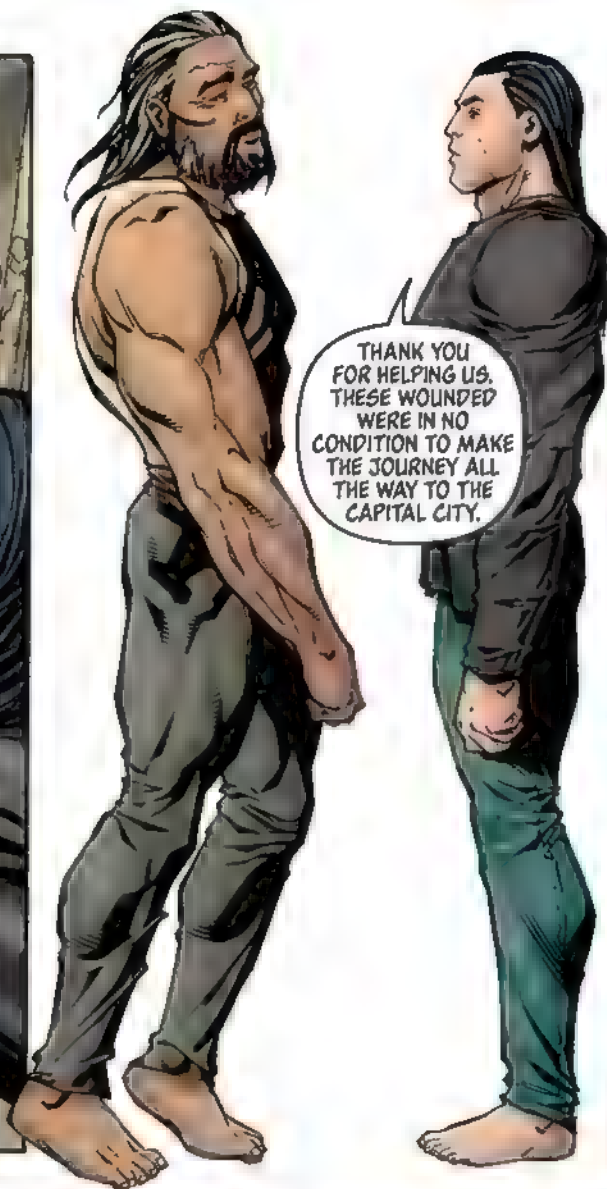
DUTY OFTEN MEANS PUTTING
YOUR HEART ASIDE IN ORDER
TO DO WHAT IS BEST. BURYING
YOUR CONCERN FOR MISSING
COMRADES, AND IGNORING
THE RAGE THAT BUILDS
INSIDE. I HAD TO FOCUS
ON THE TASK AT HAND.

THEIR IMMEDIATE
SURVIVAL.

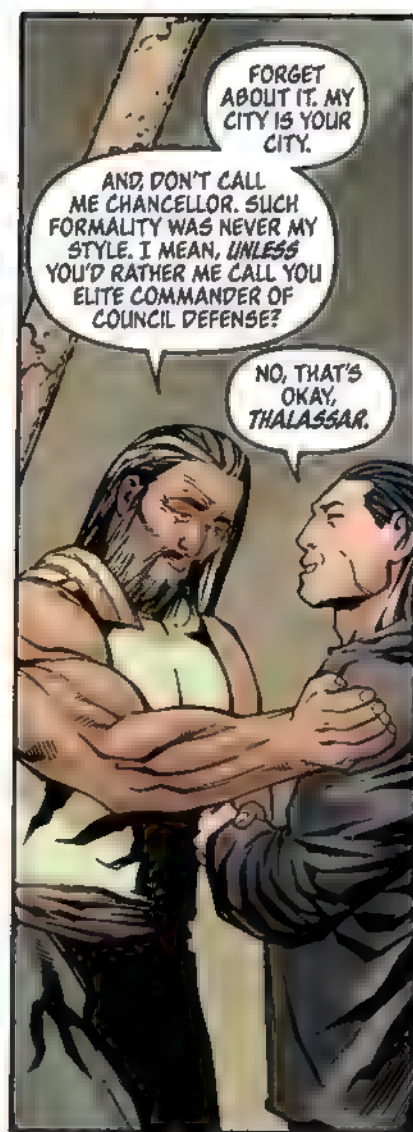


CANNON!

CHANCELLOR.



THANK YOU FOR HELPING US. THESE WOUNDED WERE IN NO CONDITION TO MAKE THE JOURNEY ALL THE WAY TO THE CAPITAL CITY.



FORGET ABOUT IT. MY CITY IS YOUR CITY.

AND, DON'T CALL ME CHANCELLOR. SUCH FORMALITY WAS NEVER MY STYLE. I MEAN, UNLESS YOU'D RATHER ME CALL YOU ELITE COMMANDER OF COUNCIL DEFENSE?

NO, THAT'S OKAY, THALASSAR.



HOW ARE THEY?

THEY ARE ALIVE, WHICH IS MORE THAN CAN BE SAID FOR SOME OF THEIR FELLOW SOLDIERS.



WHAT HAPPENED, CANNON?



I CAN'T BE SURE, BUT BY THE LOOK OF THINGS, I'D SAY THEY WERE USING THEM TO STUDY US.

BUT, WHAT WOULD THE HUMANS WANT WITH THEM?



AND, NOT IN AN OBSERVATIONAL CAPACITY.

THAT CAN'T BE GOOD. ARE YOU WORRIED?



YES. WE SHOULD ALL BE WORRIED.



NOBODY WANTS TO SEE A WAR.

THEN, LET US HOPE IT DOES NOT COME TO THAT.



"YES...LET US HOPE"

SAN DIEGO
NAVAL BASE



CHANCE, YOU'VE MADE SOME
BRILLIANT DECISIONS IN
YOUR LIFE, BUT THIS ONE
TAKES THE CAKE.

YOU ARE SUCH AN IDIOT. YOU
WERE LONG GONE FROM THIS
CRAZY MESS, SIPPING MAI
TAIS IN BORA BORA.

AND, NOW...

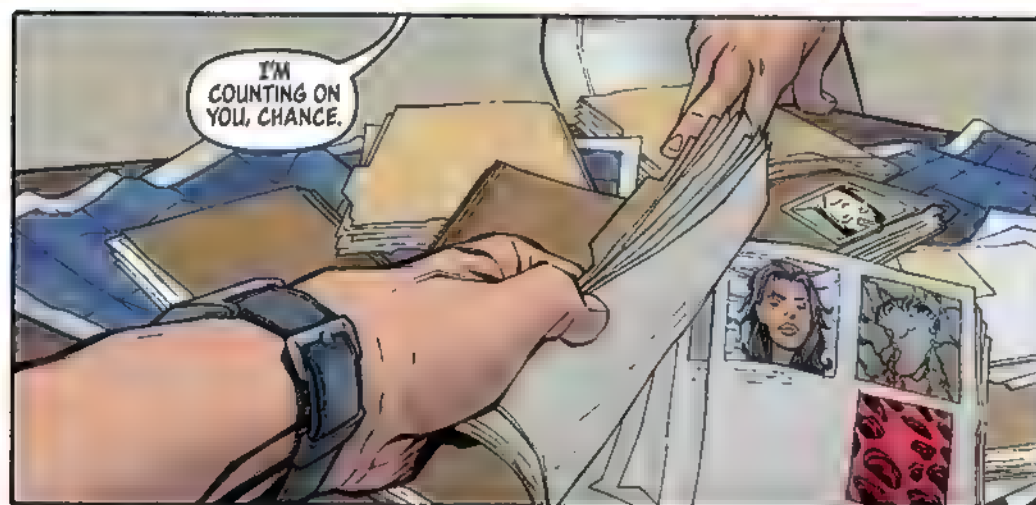
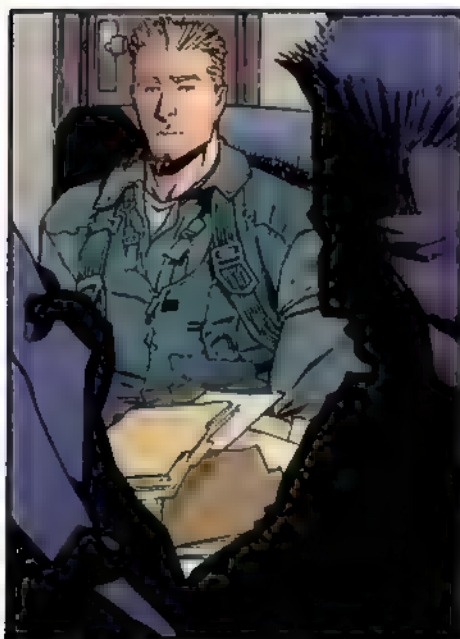
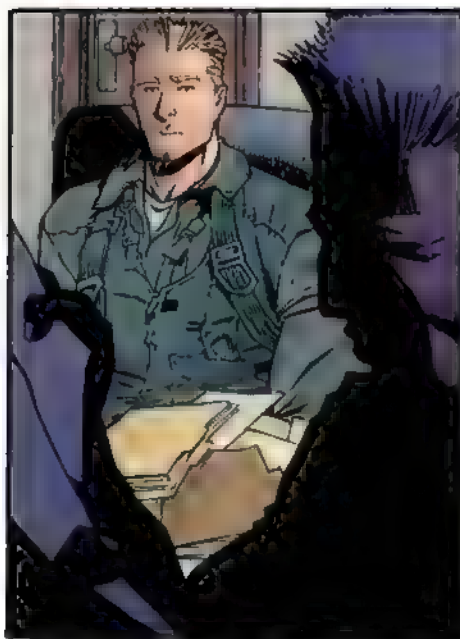
CHANCE, THE
ADMIRAL WILL
SEE YOU.

GOOD. LET'S GET
THIS OVER WITH.

YES, SIR.



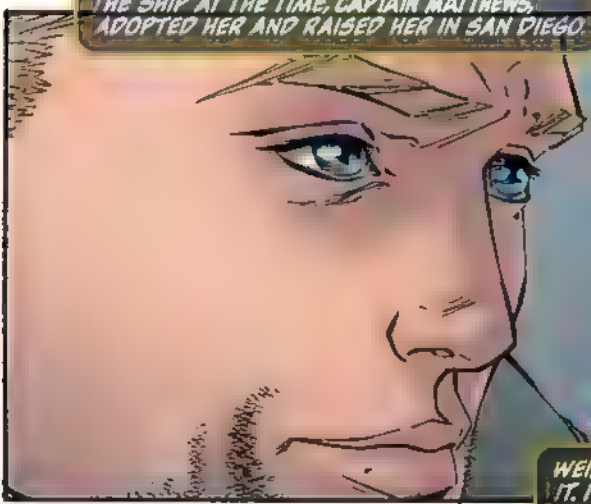
SIT DOWN,
CHANCE.



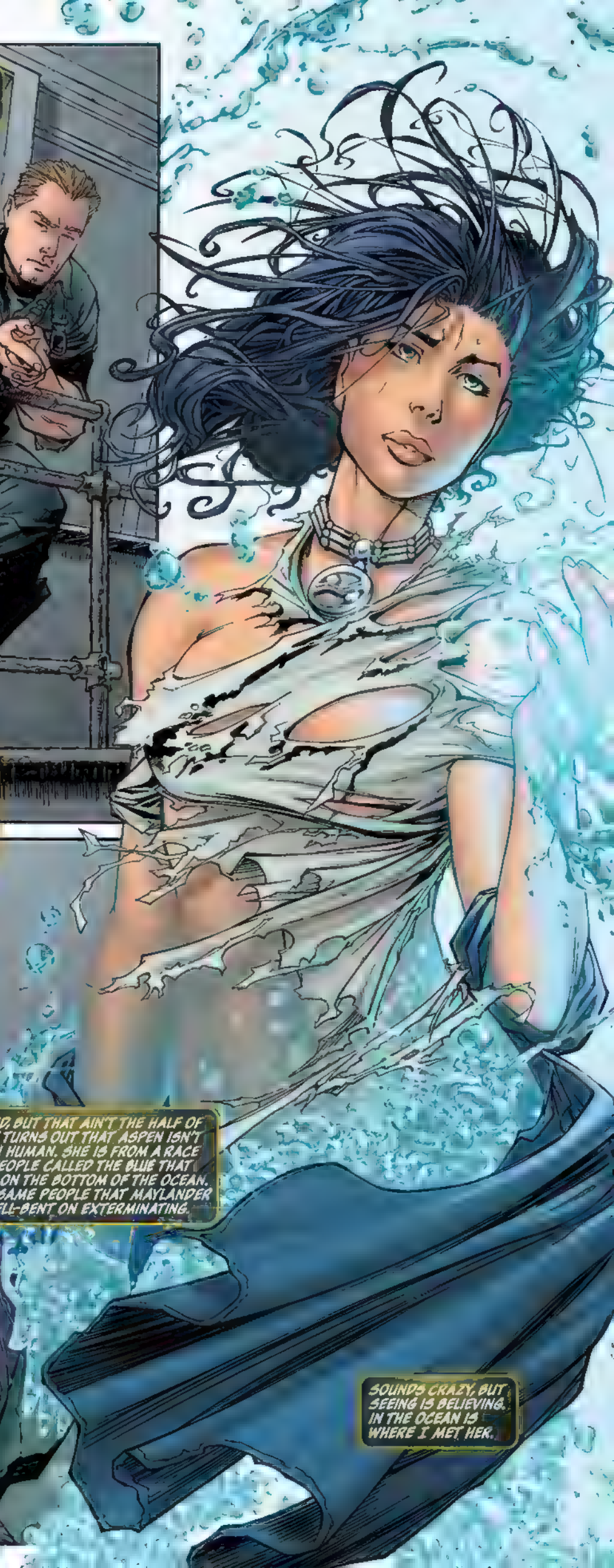


THAT'S RIGHT—TAKING ORDERS
FROM CAPTAIN AHAB HIMSELF AS
HE HUNTS FOR HIS GREAT WHALE.

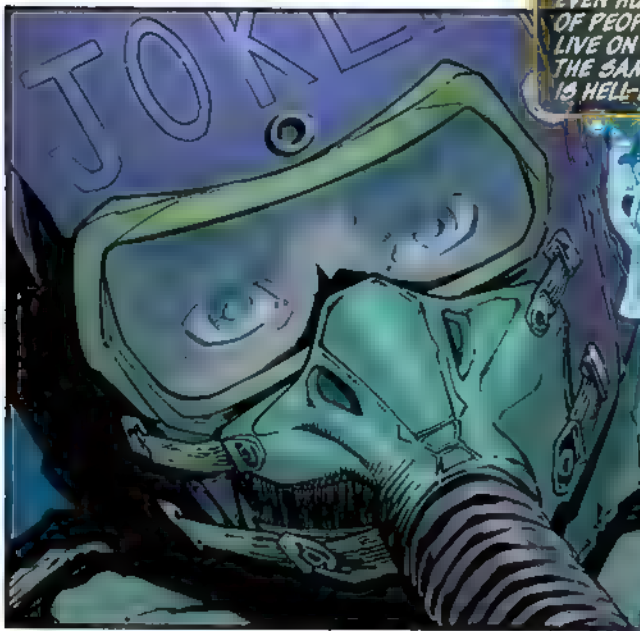
ALL OF THIS FOR A
GIRL. GRANTED, IT'S
NOT EVERYDAY YOU
COME ACROSS
SOMEONE LIKE ASPEN.



A STOWAWAY ON A CRUISE SHIP WHEN SHE
WAS JUST A LITTLE GIRL, ASPEN HAD NO
MEMORY OF WHO SHE WAS OR WHERE SHE
CAME FROM. A NAVAL OFFICER WHO WAS ON
THE SHIP AT THE TIME, CAPTAIN MATTHEWS,
ADOPTED HER AND RAISED HER IN SAN DIEGO.



WEIRD, BUT THAT AIN'T THE HALF OF
IT. IT TURNS OUT THAT ASPEN ISN'T
EVEN HUMAN. SHE IS FROM A RACE
OF PEOPLE CALLED THE BLUE THAT
LIVE ON THE BOTTOM OF THE OCEAN.
THE SAME PEOPLE THAT MAYLANDER
IS HELL-BENT ON EXTERMINATING.



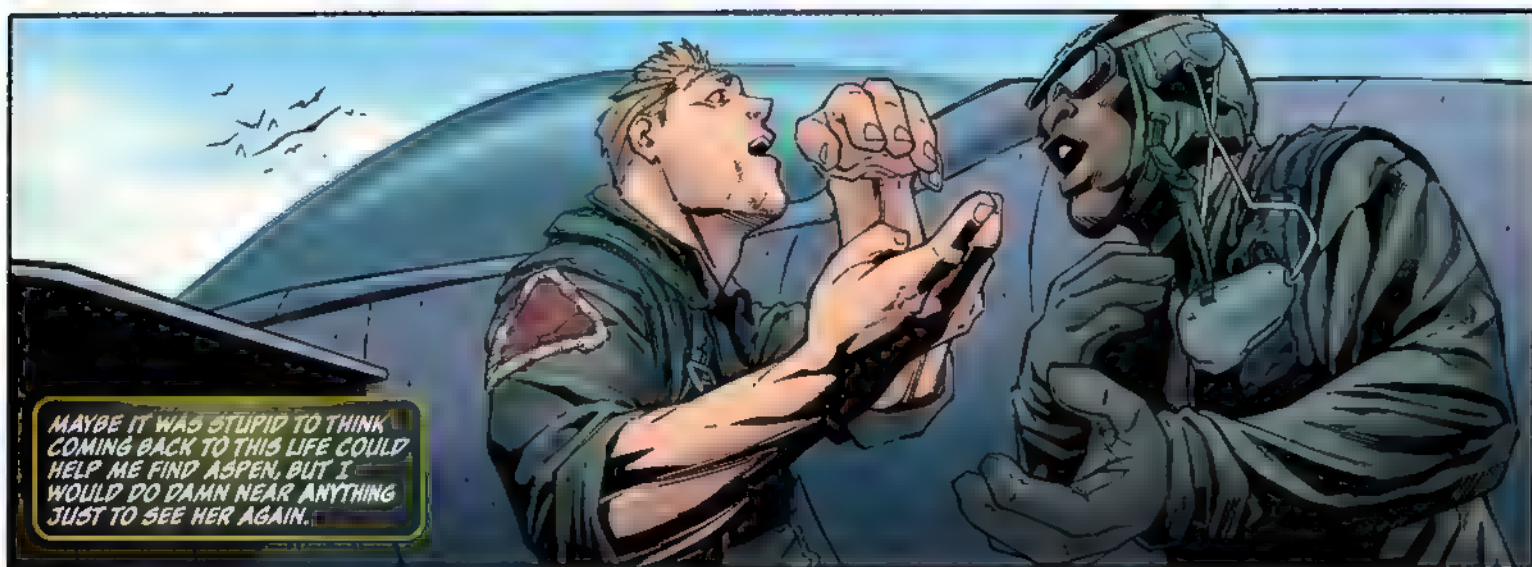
SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT
SEEING IS BELIEVING.
IN THE OCEAN IS
WHERE I MET HER.



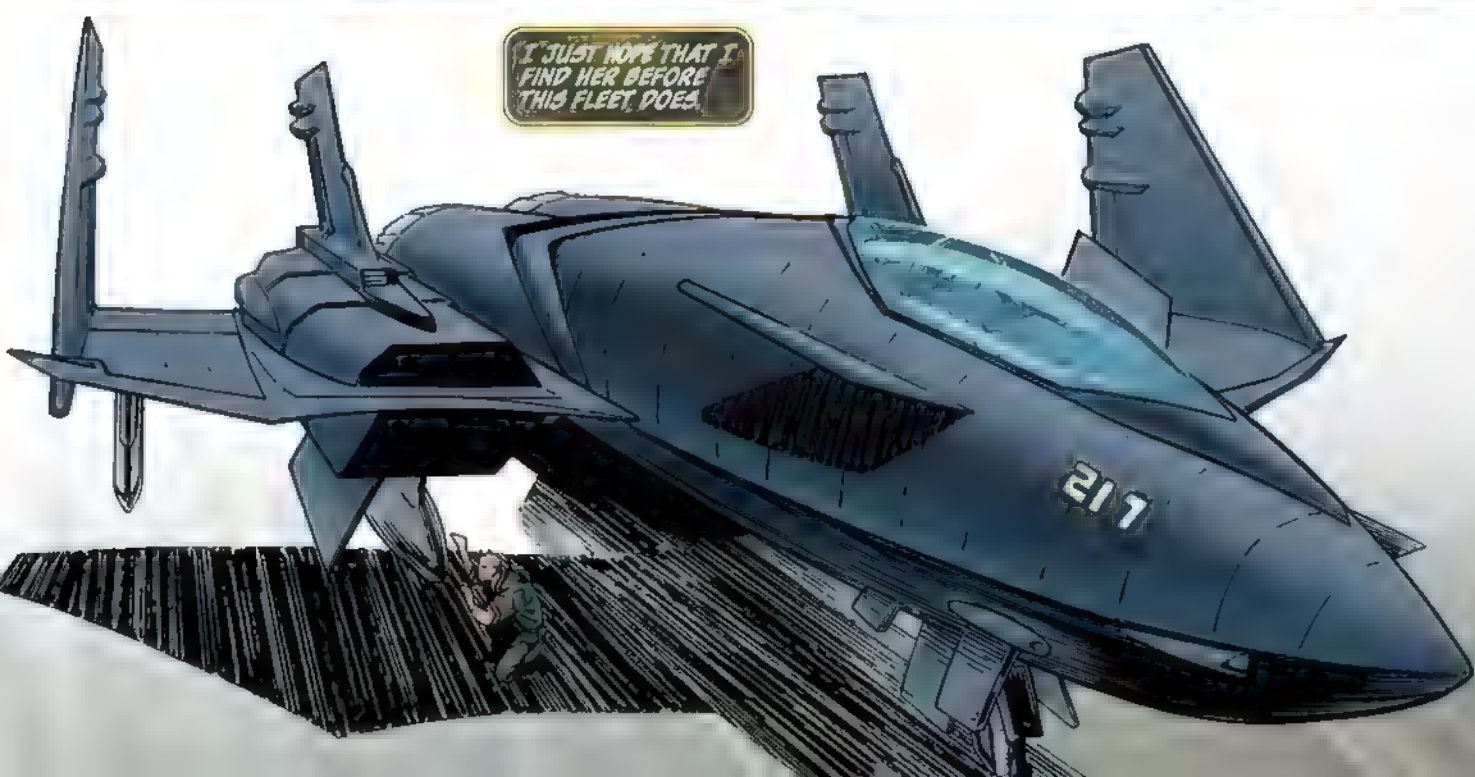
THEN, I GOT CAUGHT UP WITH ASPEN AND THE OTHER BLUE DURING THAT WHOLE BLUE SUN FIASCO. I'M STILL TRYING TO SORT OUT ALL THE FREAKY STUFF I SAW.



IF YOU ASK ME, BUT NOBODY EVER DOES, MAYLANDER'S GOT THE WRONG IDEA ABOUT THEM. THE BLUE AREN'T LOOKING TO COME UP HERE AND START TROUBLE. WELL, THAT ONE NAMED KILLIAN WANTED TO, BUT ASPEN TOOK CARE OF HIM.



MAYBE IT WAS STUPID TO THINK COMING BACK TO THIS LIFE COULD HELP ME FIND ASPEN, BUT I WOULD DO DAMN NEAR ANYTHING JUST TO SEE HER AGAIN.



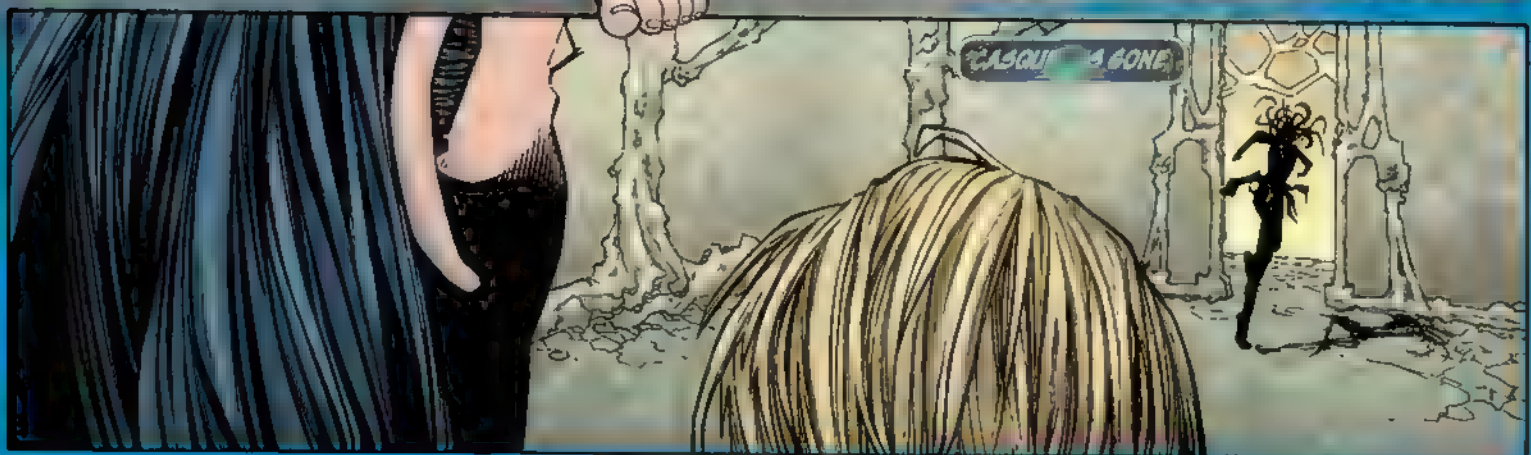
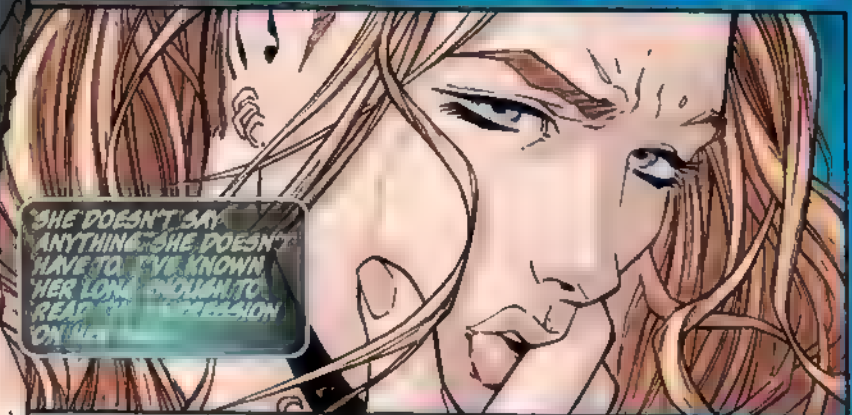
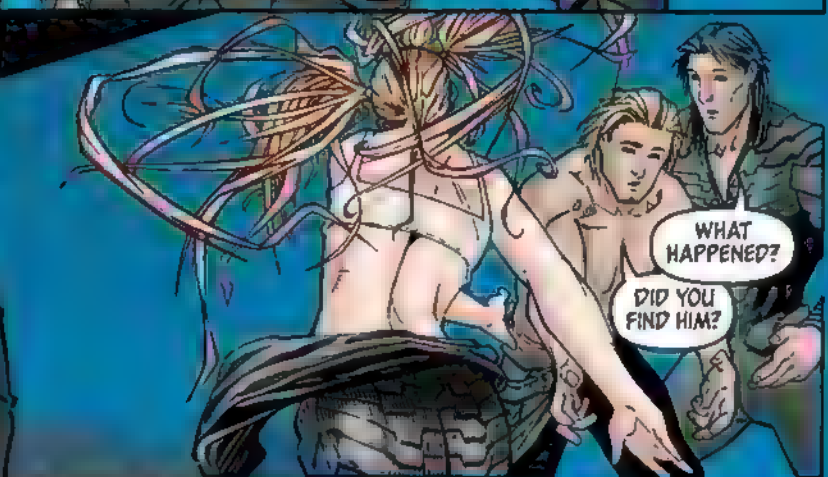
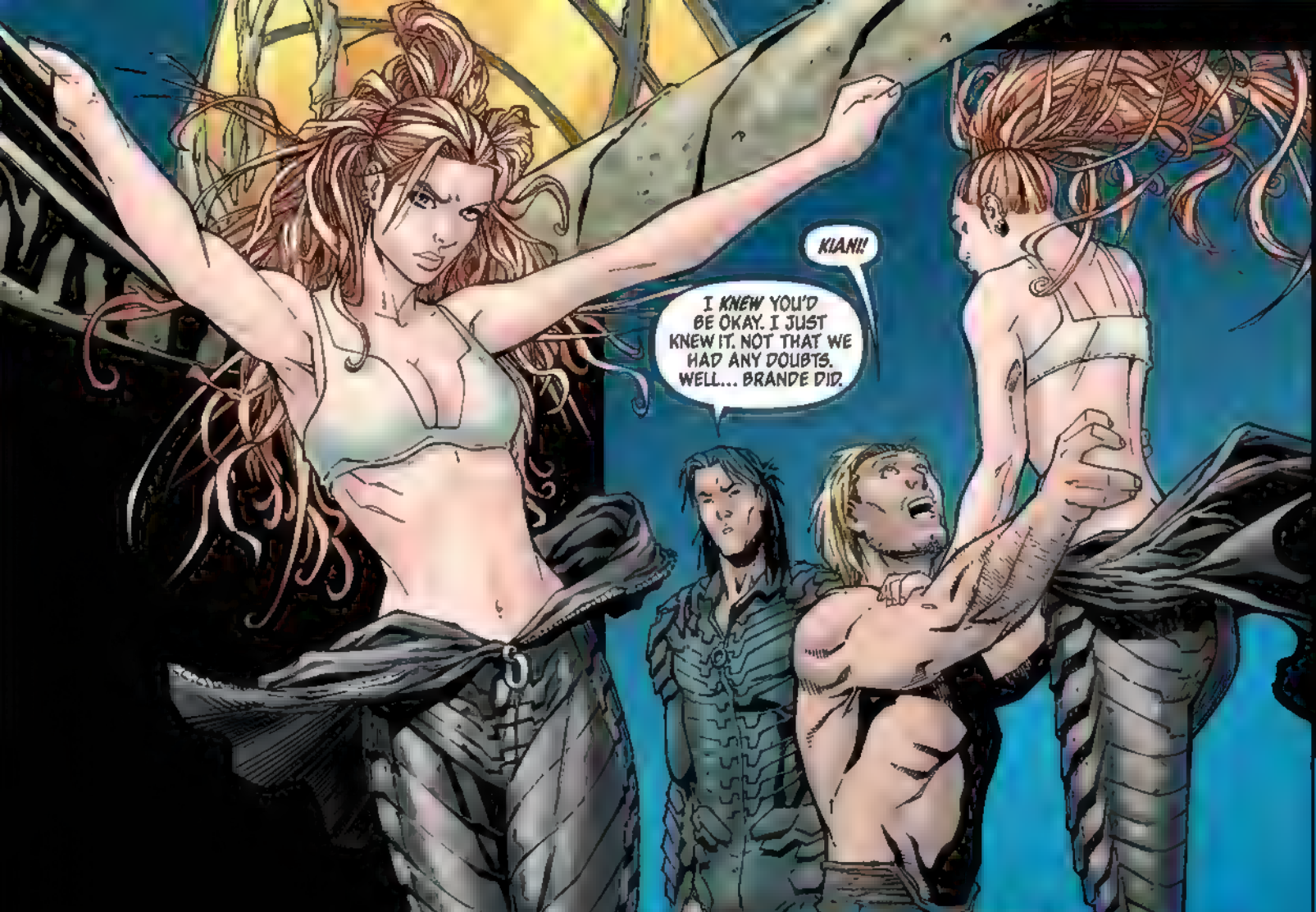
I JUST HOPE THAT I FIND HER BEFORE THIS FLEET DOES.

EVER SINCE WE
ARRIVED HERE IN
SABA GRABED AND
I HAVE BEEN
KEEPING MY EYES
ON THE SEA.

EACH SHIP THAT COMES
IN CARRIES WITH IT A
TRACE OF HER.

I HOPE THAT IT WILL
BE THE ONE TO BRING
HER BACK TO US.







I TAKE IT FROM YOUR SILENCE SINCE YOU RETURNED THAT THINGS DID NOT GO WELL.

I'M SORRY, KIANI. MARQUESES IS NOT YOUR AVERAGE USELESS COUNCILMAN. HE'S A LOT TOUGHER THAN HE LOOKS. YOU SHOULDN'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF.

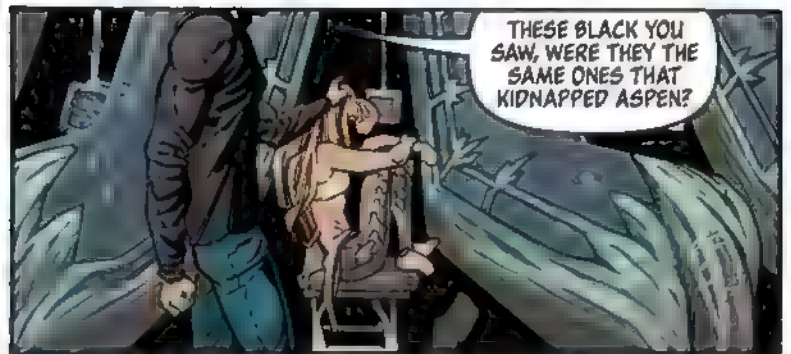
MARQUESES IS DEAD. CASQUE DEALT WITH HIM... USING THE POWER OF HIS TRUE FORM. THAT OF THE *BLACK*.



...YOU KNEW?

NOT QUITE, I SUSPECTED. WHERE IS HE NOW?

AFTER HIS TRANSFORMATION, OTHER *BLACK* SURFACED HE WENT WITH THEM, RETURNING TO THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA.



THESE *BLACK* YOU SAW, WERE THEY THE SAME ONES THAT KIDNAPPED ASPEN?

IS THAT ALL YOU CARE ABOUT???

IF I HADN'T BEEN CHASING AFTER THIS SUPPOSED *SAVIOR* WHEN MAYLANDER AMBUSHED MY COMRADES, I COULD HAVE HELPED CASQUE PROTECT THEM. INSTEAD, HE IS GONE, AND I'M SITTING HERE WATCHING THESE MEN BATTLE FOR THEIR LIVES!



IF ASPEN IS
AS POWERFUL
AS YOU SAY, THEN
SHE SHOULD BE
ABLE TO TAKE
CARE OF HERSELF.

HOW THIN CAN WE STRETCH OUR
RESOLVE AND STILL HAVE ANY
CHANCE OF SURVIVING THE
CONFLICT THAT IS COMING OUR
WAY? THIS MAYLANDER IS MORE
BRAZEN NOW THAN EVER. WHO
KNOWS WHAT HE MAY TRULY BE
CAPABLE OF DOING.

AND IF THE BLACK ARE ONCE AGAIN
AMONG US, WILL OUR CONFLICT WITH
THE HUMANS BE NOTHING MORE
THAN A PETTY SQUABBLE COMPARED
TO WHAT THEY HAVE IN STORE?

THE DARKNESS WITHIN ME
GROWS, BUT I DO NOT
KNOW IF IT IS MERELY
THE WHISPERS IN MY
HEAD PLACING ME.

...OR A DEEPER
REALIZATION THAT OUR
END DRAWN NEAR.

To Be Continued...



VOL. 2

#1

OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



MICHAEL
TURNER

ASPEN
Vol. 2

#1
OF 11
COVER B

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue One of Eleven

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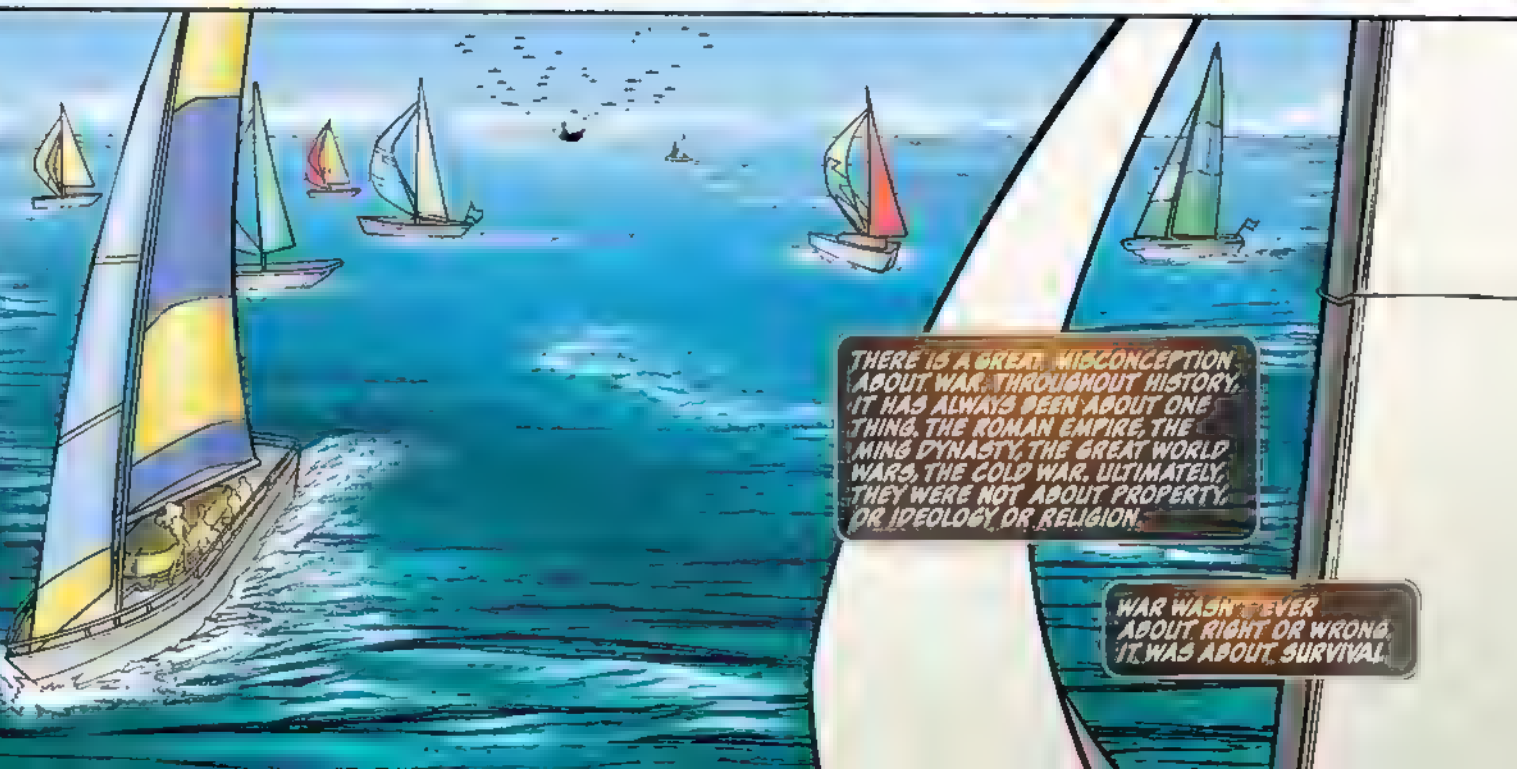
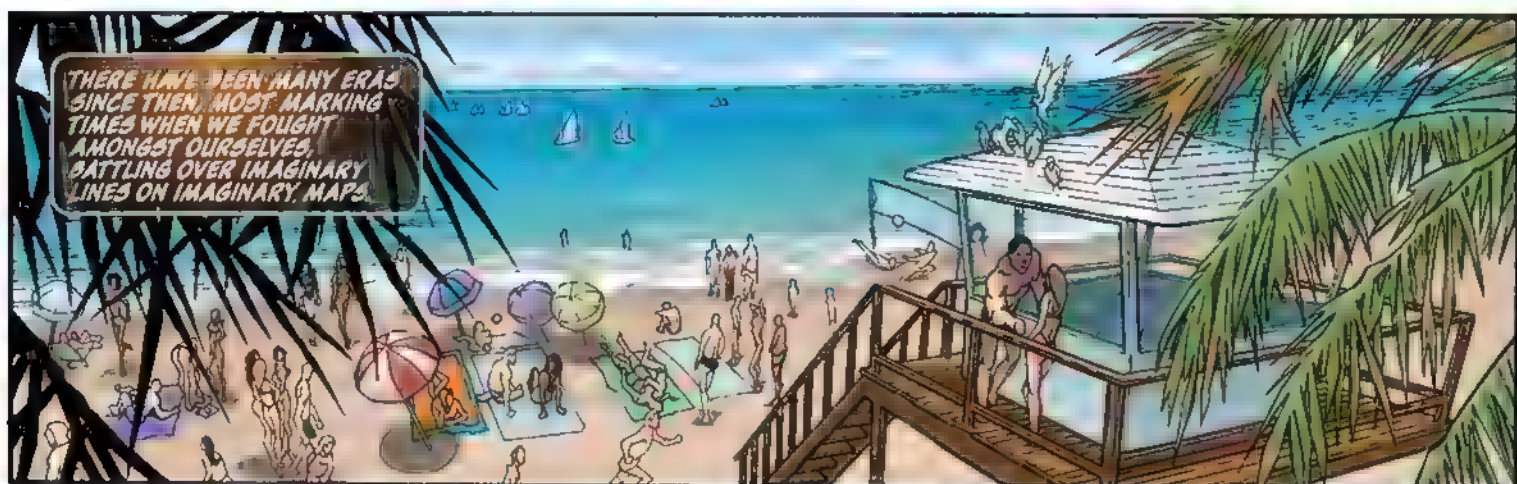
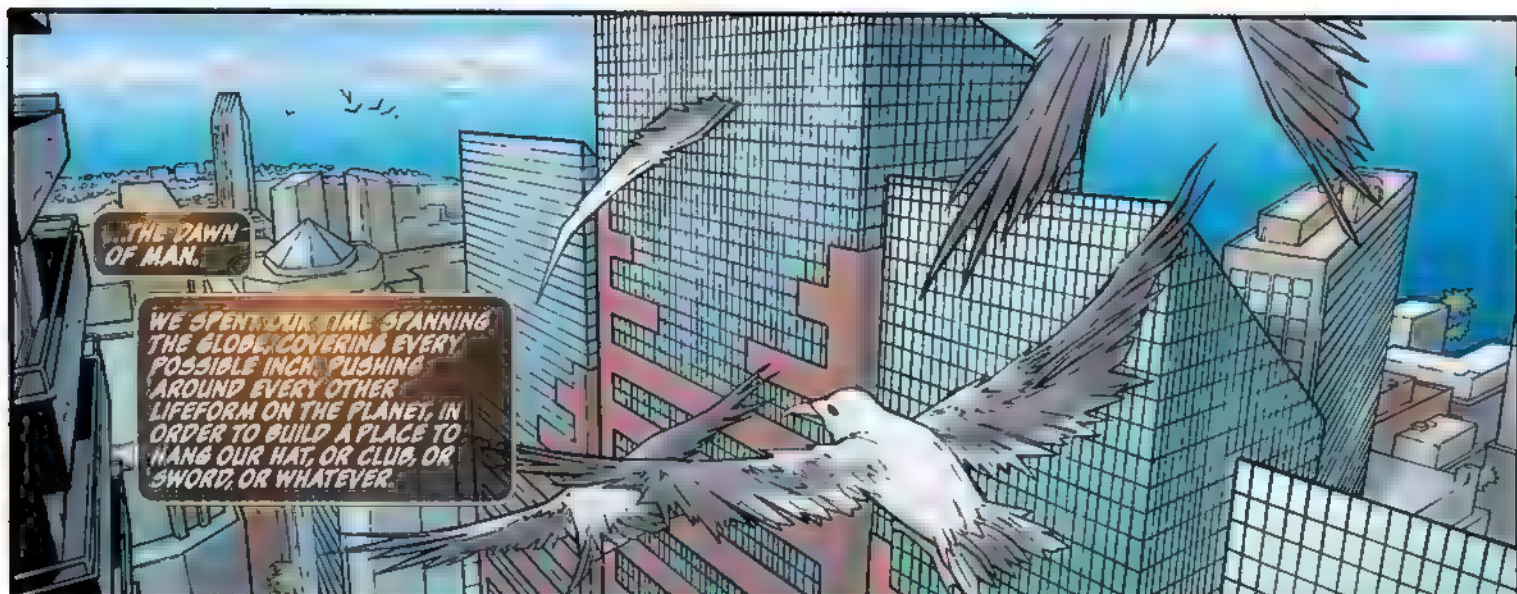
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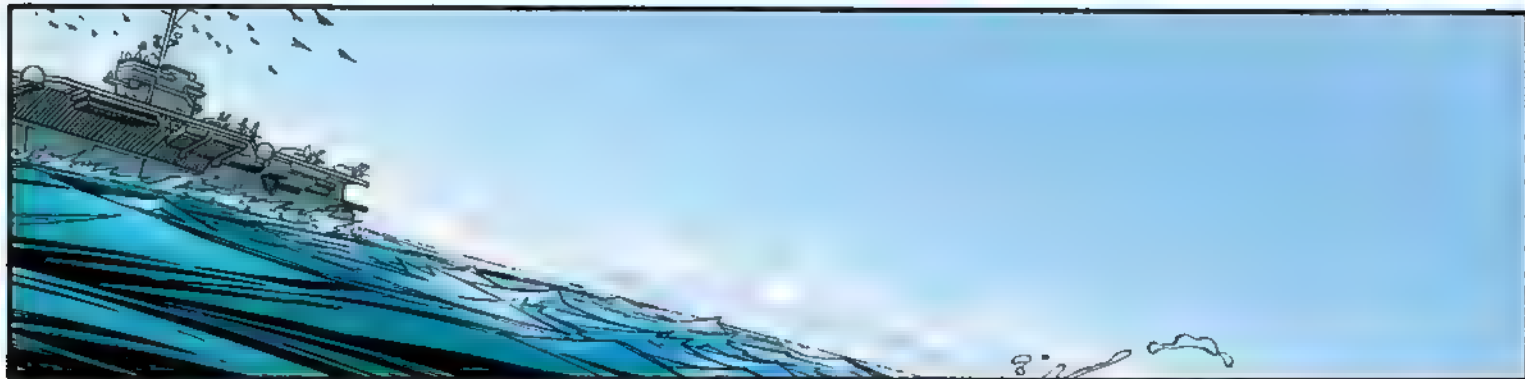
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WHILE THE REST OF THE
WORLD SLEPT, A NEW THREAT
SURFACED FROM BELOW.

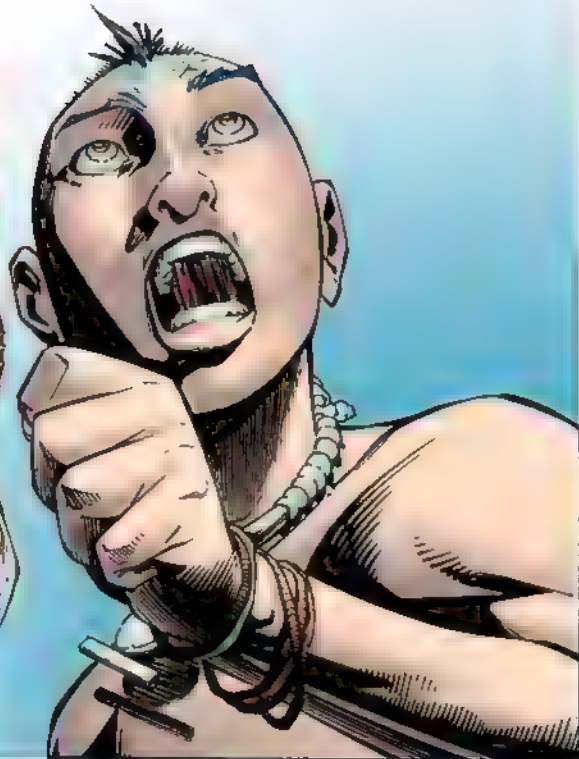
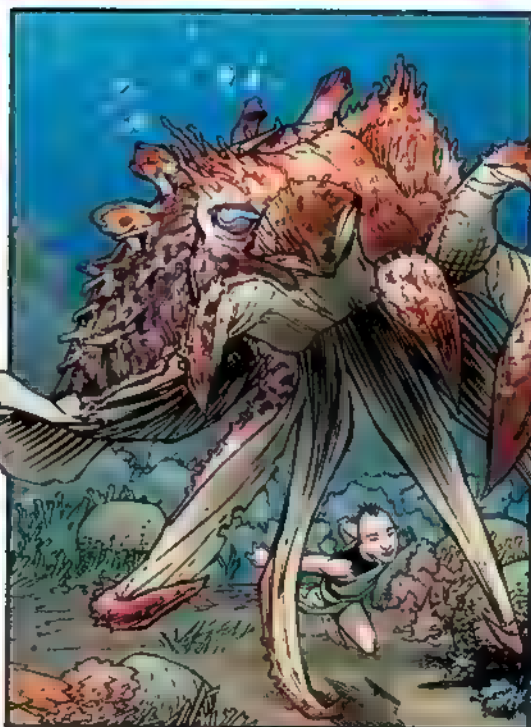
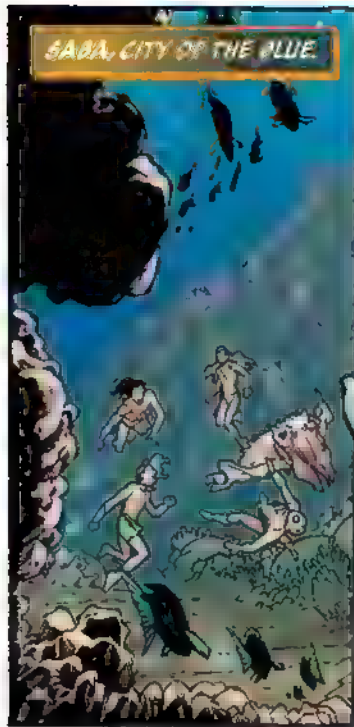
A RACE OF BEINGS FROM THE
DEEPEST AND DARKEST
REGIONS OF THE OCEAN, WITH
A LEVEL OF TECHNOLOGY THAT
SURPASSES EVEN OUR OWN.

WE MAY NOT KNOW THE EXACT
NATURE OF THEIR ORIGIN, BUT
THAT IS IRRELEVANT. IT ISN'T MY
JOB TO UNDERSTAND THEM. IT IS
MY JOB TO DESTROY THEM.

THE HISTORY BOOKS MAY
NEVER TELL THIS STORY, BUT
A NEW ERA IS BEGINNING.

THE TIME FOR OUR
WAR WITH THE
SEA HAS COME.

SABA, CITY OF THE BLUE.

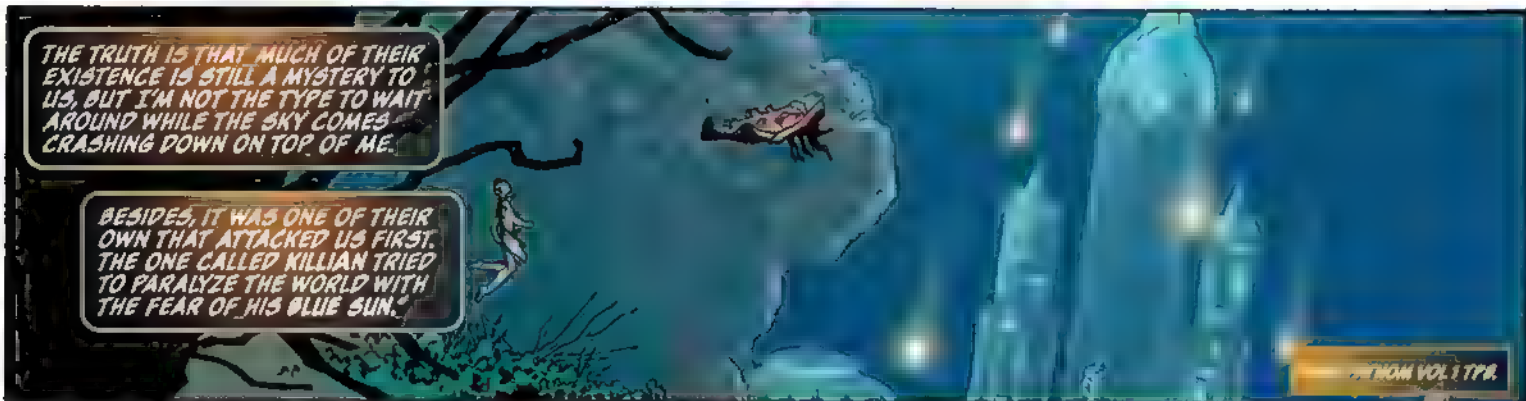


I'VE DEALT WITH THEM BEFORE,
UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL. THEY
ARE RUTHLESS AND DANGEROUS.
VIOLENCE AND A WILL TO
DOMINATE ARE INHERENT IN THEM.



THE TRUTH IS THAT MUCH OF THEIR
EXISTENCE IS STILL A MYSTERY TO
US, BUT I'M NOT THE TYPE TO WAIT
AROUND WHILE THE SKY COMES
CRASHING DOWN ON TOP OF ME.

BESIDES, IT WAS ONE OF THEIR
OWN THAT ATTACKED US FIRST.
THE ONE CALLED KILLIAN TRIED
TO PARALYZE THE WORLD WITH
THE FEAR OF HIS BLUE SUN.



FROM VOL. 1 TPB



WE DIDN'T START
THIS WAR.



...BUT WE DRAIN WELL WILL
BE THE ONES FINISHING IT!

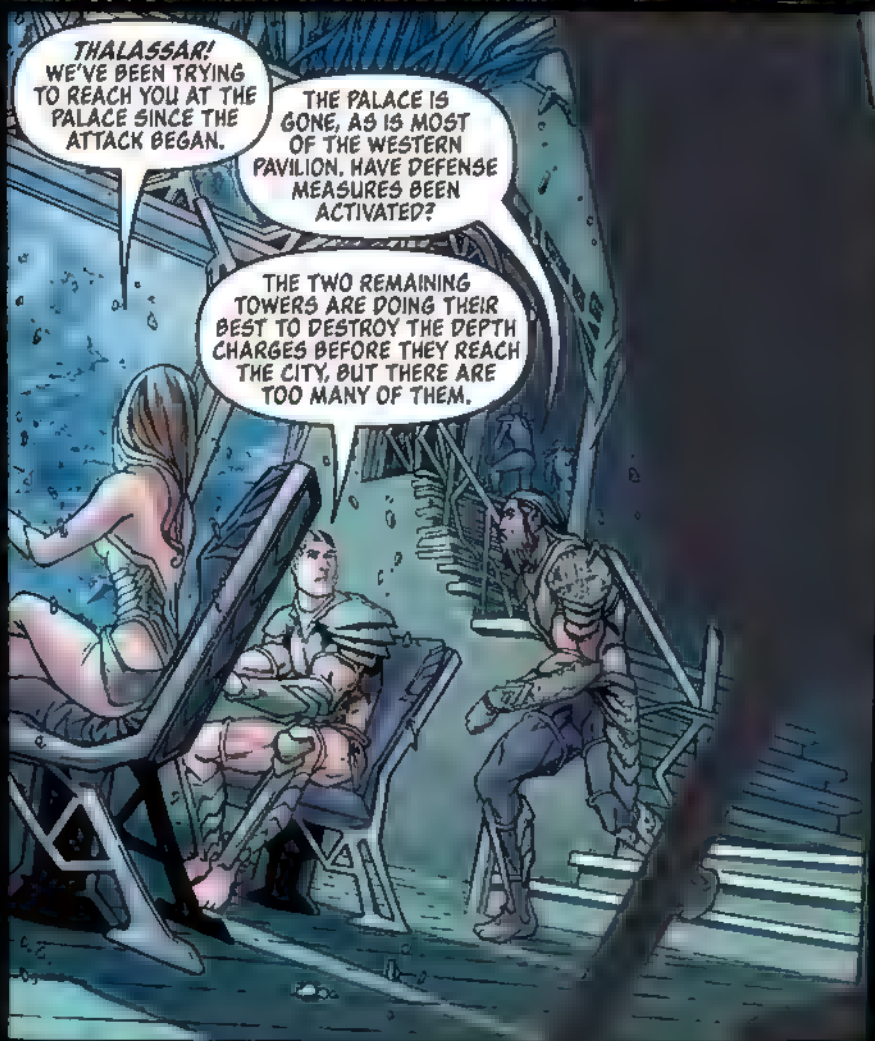


THE SCALE OF SUCH
DESTRUCTION IS
ALMOST UNPEERABLE.



MY TOWNSMEN
TOWARD THESE
ATTACKERS, BUT A
GREATER ANGER IS
DIRECTED AT MYSELF.

FOR THIS... MY FAULT...
SABA IS MY RESPONSIBILITY
AND IT APPEARS THAT I
HAVE FAILED MISERABLY.



THALASSAR!
WE'VE BEEN TRYING
TO REACH YOU AT THE
PALACE SINCE THE
ATTACK BEGAN.

THE PALACE IS
GONE, AS IS MOST
OF THE WESTERN
PAVILION. HAVE DEFENSE
MEASURES BEEN
ACTIVATED?

THE TWO REMAINING
TOWERS ARE DOING THEIR
BEST TO DESTROY THE DEPTH
CHARGES BEFORE THEY REACH
THE CITY, BUT THERE ARE
TOO MANY OF THEM.



AND, WHAT
ABOUT OUR
FLEET?

GONE. THE
HANGERS WERE
THE FIRST THINGS
THEY HIT.

IN OTHER
WORDS, WE ARE
DEFENSELESS.



WITH THE DAMAGE TO
OUR COMMUNICATIONS
SYSTEM AND THE INTERFERENCE
FROM ALL THE DEBRIS, OUR
SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS
CANNOT EVEN CONFIRM WHO
IS ATTACKING US.



IT'S THE
HUMANS.

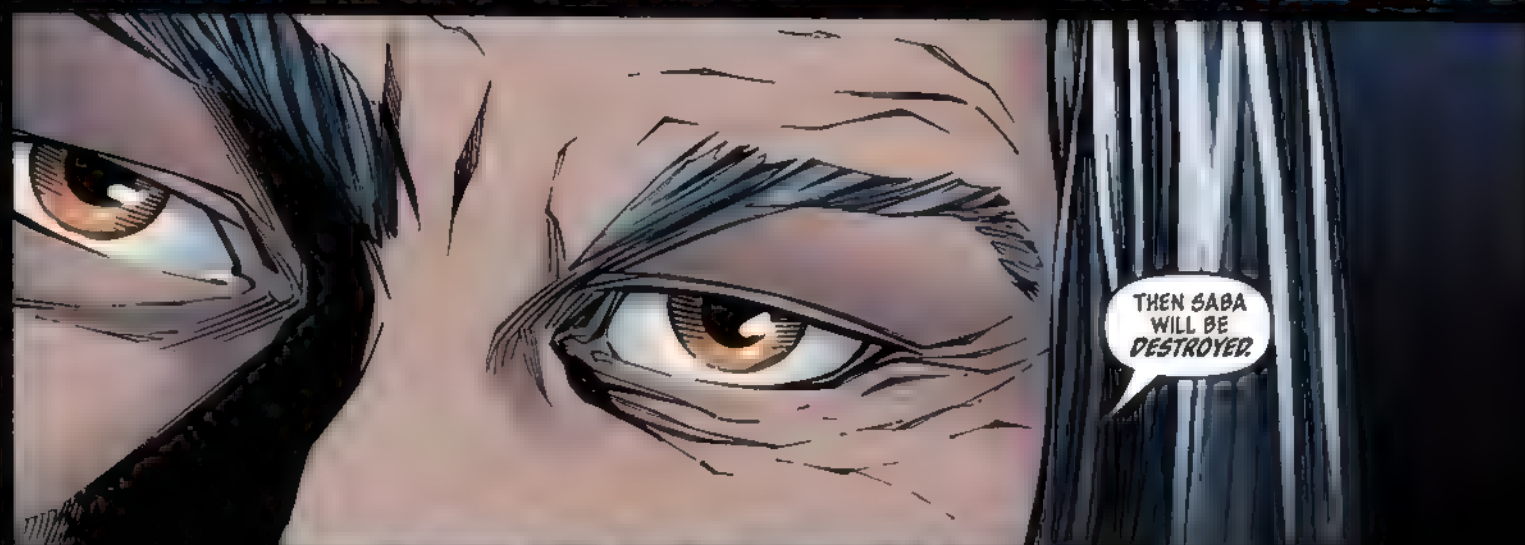
THE
HUMANS?!?
WHY WOULD THEY
ATTACK US?



I'LL WORRY
ABOUT THE WHY LATER.
FOR NOW, WE HAVE TO DIG
IN AND WAIT IT OUT. WE
HAVEN'T THE MEANS TO
GO UP AGAINST THEIR
BEHEMOTHS.

INFORM THE
CAPITAL CITY OF
OUR SITUATION. WE
NEED THEIR HELP.

AND, IF THEY
DON'T COME?

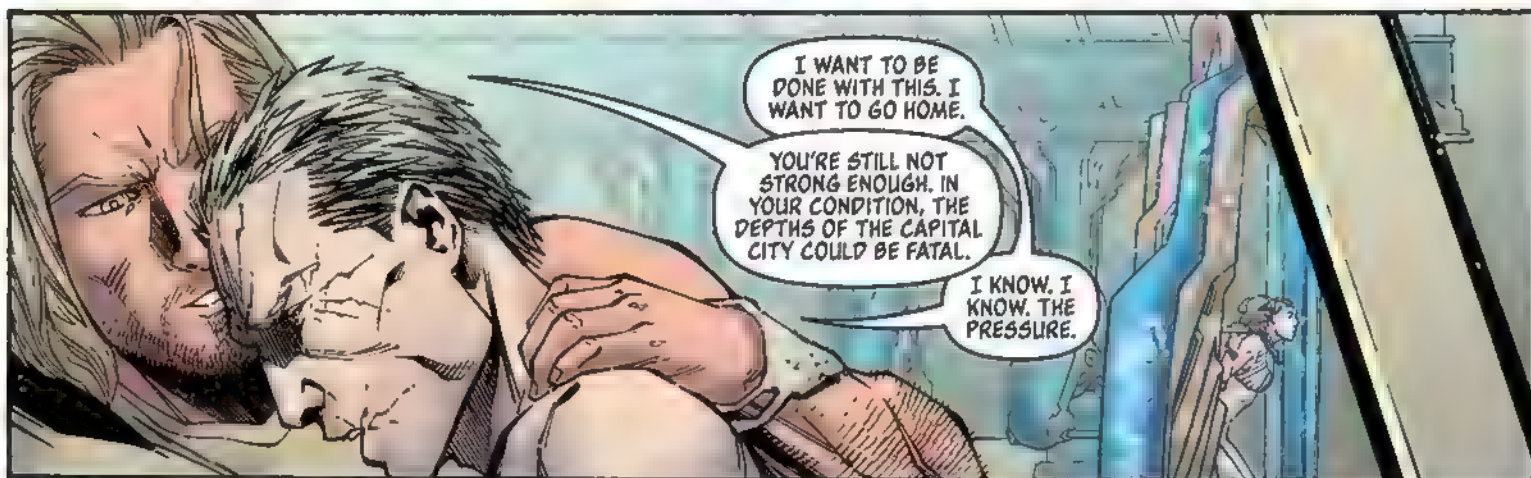
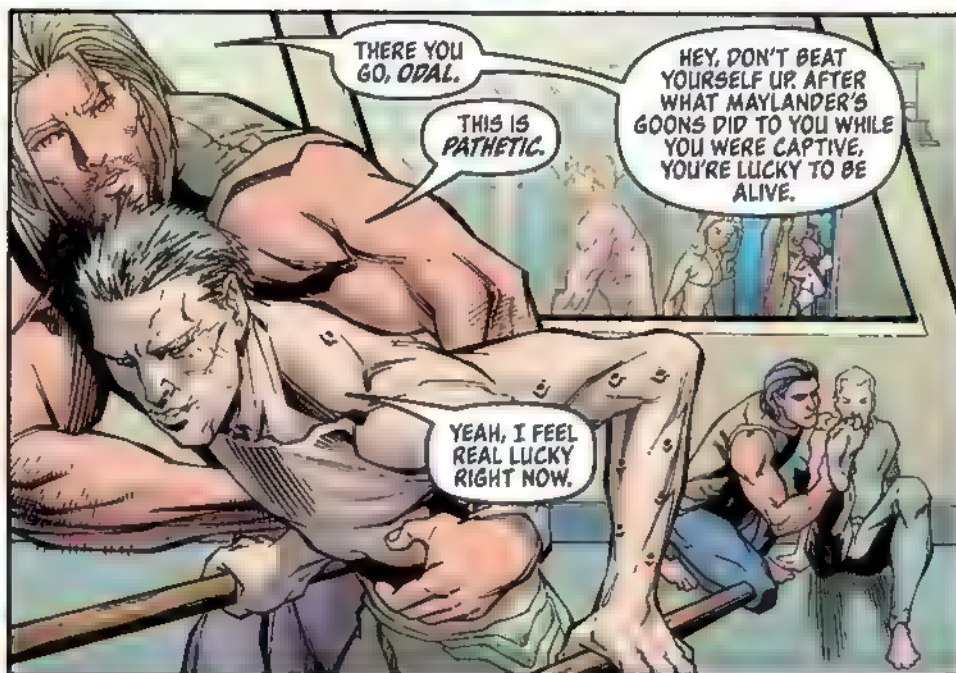


THEN SABA
WILL BE
DESTROYED.

POR—GARRISON OF
THE CAPITAL CITY.

COME ON...
ONE MORE.

YOU CAN
DO IT.



AS A WARRIOR, I AM TRAINED TO BE SELF-RELIANT. MY WHOLE LIFE HAS BEEN ABOUT SURVIVING ON MY OWN. ABOUT NOT NEEDING ANYONE.

AND I NEVER THOUGHT I DID, UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.

CASQUE IS GONE, PERHAPS FOREVER. AFTER MY PARENTS DIED, HE RAISED ME, AND TRAINED ME. HE WAS MY MENTOR, MY LEADER, MY FATHER.

IT SEEMS LIKE LOSING HIM HAS BECOME SOMETHING OF A PATTERN. FIRST, A HUMAN NAMED MAYLANDER KIDNAPPED HIM FROM SHEPHERD'S FIELD, THEN, COUNCILMAN MARQUESES BETRAYED US ALL DURING THE RESCUE MISSION BY TAKING CASQUE FOR HIMSELF. OBVIOUSLY, HE HAD HIS OWN AGENDA ALL THESE TIMES.

FINALLY, I WAS FORCED TO WATCH CASQUE WALK AWAY FROM ME WHEN HE CHOSE TO RETURN TO THE SEA WITH HIS KIND.

I HAVE OTHERS IN MY LIFE THAT ARE CLOSE TO ME... BRANDE, SIPHON. YET I STILL FEEL ALONE, AND THEY REASSURE ME.

BUT WITH OR WITHOUT CASQUE, I WILL GO ON. I WILL FIGHT.

BECAUSE THAT IS ALL I KNOW HOW TO DO.

THE FATHOM DAWN
ANNU-SERIES



I AM THE CAPTAIN OF THE COUNCIL'S
SECURITY FORCE. I AM RESPONSIBLE
FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL BLUE
CITIZENS. BUT LATELY I'VE BEEN
HIDING LIKE A FRIGHTENED CHILD.

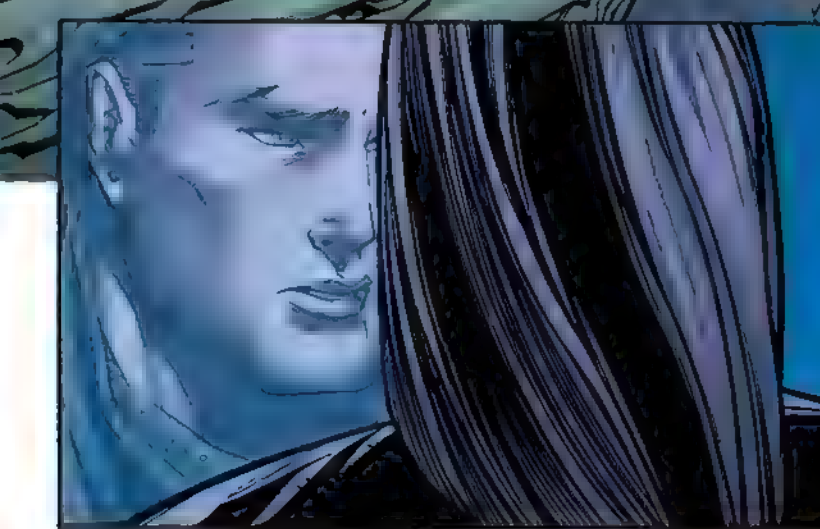
I AM TIRED, BUT I CANNOT
SLEEP. OR MAYBE I CAN, BUT I
AM AFRAID TO CLOSE MY EYES.

AFRAID I WILL
SEE HIS FACE.

TARAS.

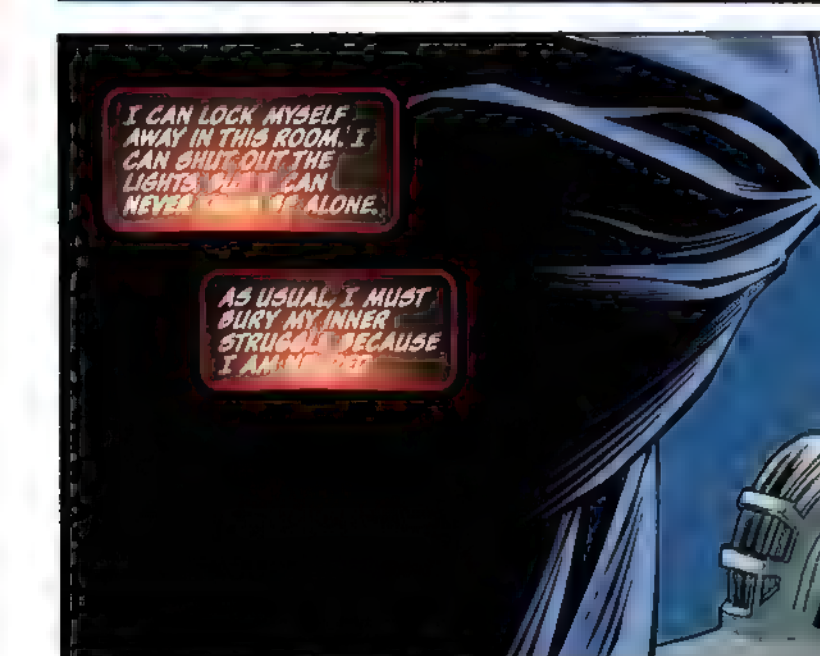
ONE OF KILLIAN'S DISSIDENTS, TARAS
DIED DURING THE BATTLE OF THE
BLUE SUN. HURLING HIM INTO THE
STREAM OF ENERGY I DESTROYED
HIM. BUT THAT DID NOT STOP VANA
FROM TRYING TO CORRECT HER
SON BY USING HIM AS A HOST.

ATHON VOL. 1
PAGES 15-17



I TRY TO IGNORE IT, BUT THE
TRUTH IS THAT HER ATTEMPTS
WERE NOT A TOTAL FAILURE.

TARAS IS INSIDE ME.
WAITING TO COME OUT.
WAITING TO TAKE CONTROL.



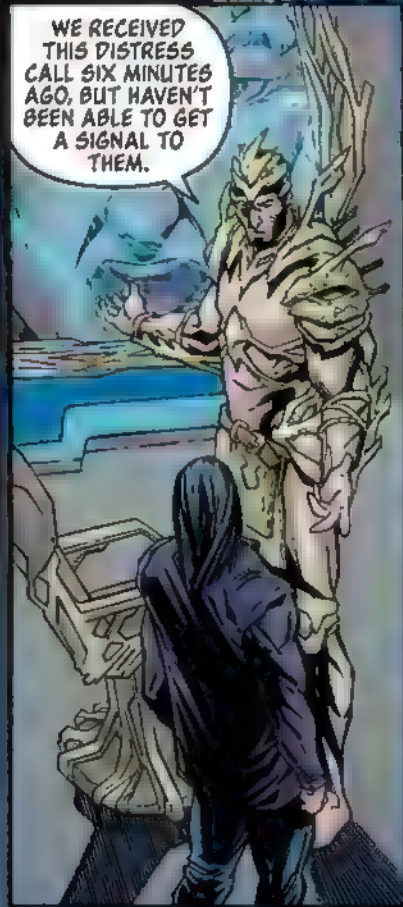
I CAN LOCK MYSELF
AWAY IN THIS ROOM. I
CAN SHUT OUT THE
LIGHTS, BUT I CAN
NEVER BE ALONE.

AS USUAL, I MUST
BURY MY INNER
STRUGGLE BECAUSE
I AM NOT HER.

CANNON,
WE NEED
YOU.



THIS IS **MITHOR** OF SABA. THE HUMANS HAVE ATTACKED THE CITY. OUR DEFENSES HAVE BEEN DESTROYED AND WE DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER WE CAN HOLD OUT. *PLEASE*, WE NEED HELP.



WE RECEIVED THIS DISTRESS CALL SIX MINUTES AGO, BUT HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET A SIGNAL TO THEM.

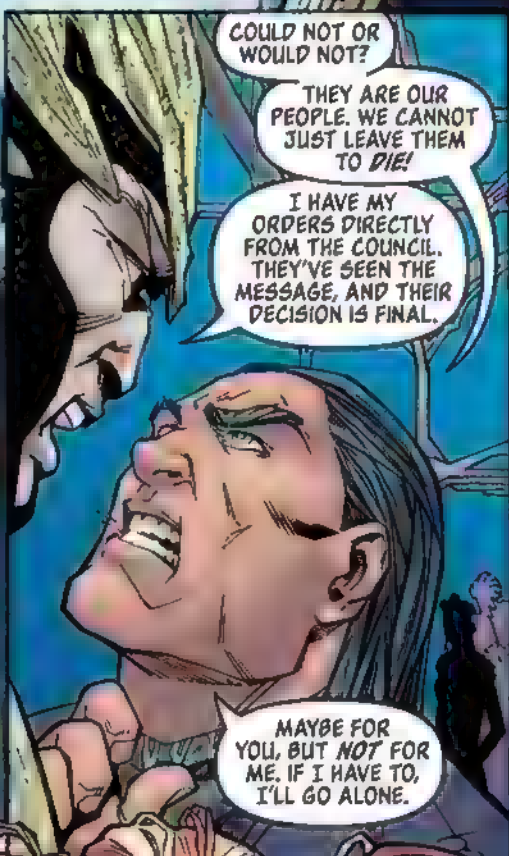


PREPARE FOR LAUNCH. I WANT ALL AVAILABLE PILOTS READY FOR TAKEOFF IN TEN MINUTES.

CANNON, WE CANNOT.

WHAT?

YOU KNOW THE COUNCIL'S STANCE WITH REGARD TO THE OUTER TERRITORIES. THEY WERE **WARNED** ABOUT SETTLING IN SUCH SHALLOW WATERS. THE COUNCIL TOLD THEM THEY COULD NOT BE PROTECTED.

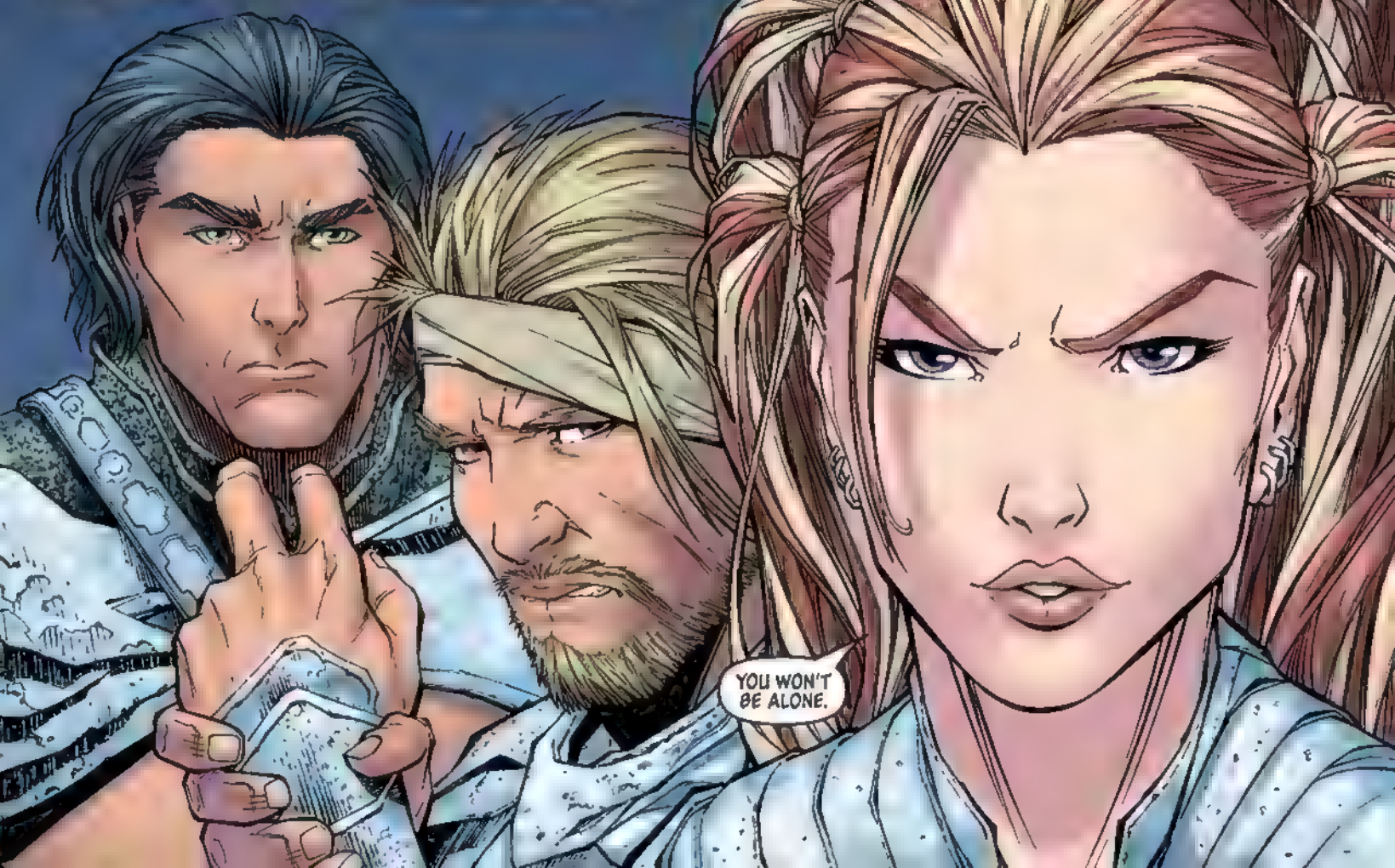


COULD NOT OR WOULD NOT?

THEY ARE OUR PEOPLE. WE CANNOT JUST LEAVE THEM TO DIE!

I HAVE MY ORDERS DIRECTLY FROM THE COUNCIL. THEY'VE SEEN THE MESSAGE, AND THEIR DECISION IS FINAL.

MAYBE FOR YOU, BUT **NOT** FOR ME. IF I HAVE TO, I'LL GO ALONE.



YOU WON'T BE ALONE.



EVEN AT TOP
SPEED, THE BATTLE
WILL BE OVER
BEFORE WE EVEN
REACH SABA.

THEN WE'LL
JUST HAVE TO DO
BETTER THAN TOP
SPEED.

CANNON,
ISN'T SABA THE
OTHER WAY?

THERE IS A
HYDROPORT
AROUND THIS RIDGE.
IT WILL GET US THERE
IN MINUTES.

A HYDROPORT?
THEY'VE BEEN
DEACTIVATED FOR
YEARS... I THOUGHT
THEY WEREN'T
SAFE.

THEY ARE
COMPLETELY SAFE---
IF YOU KNOW WHAT
YOU ARE DOING.

WELL... DO
YOU?

SHUT UP,
BRANDE.

JUST
STRAP IN AND
HANG ON!



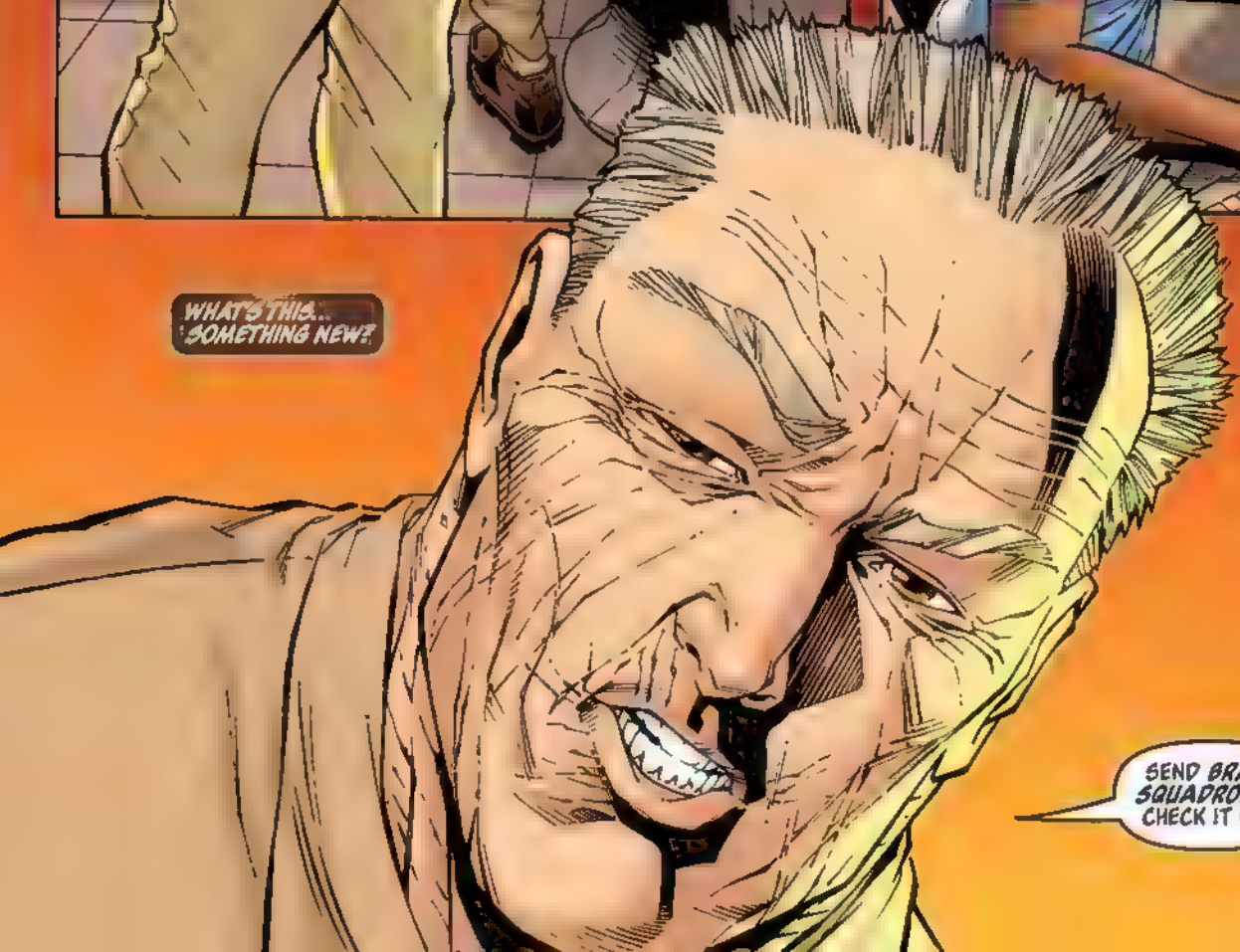
ADMIRAL,
THE FIGHTERS
HAVE REACHED
THE PERIMETER
OF THE CITY.



INSTRUCT THE
ACHILLES AND THE
AJAX TO CEASE ALL
DEPTH CHARGE
DEPLOYMENT AND STAND
READY. SEND IN THE
SECOND WAVE.

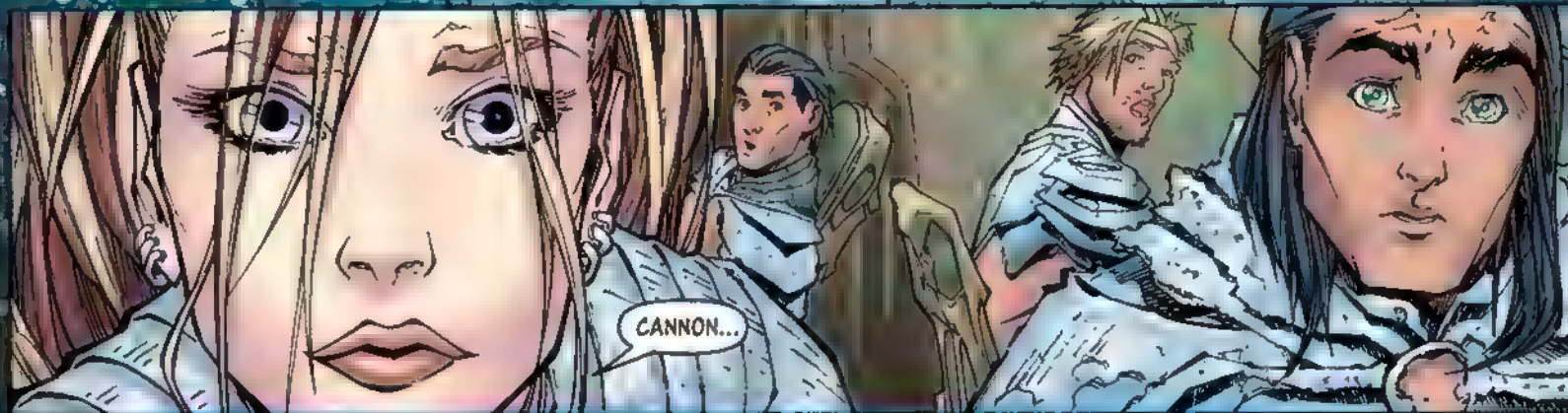
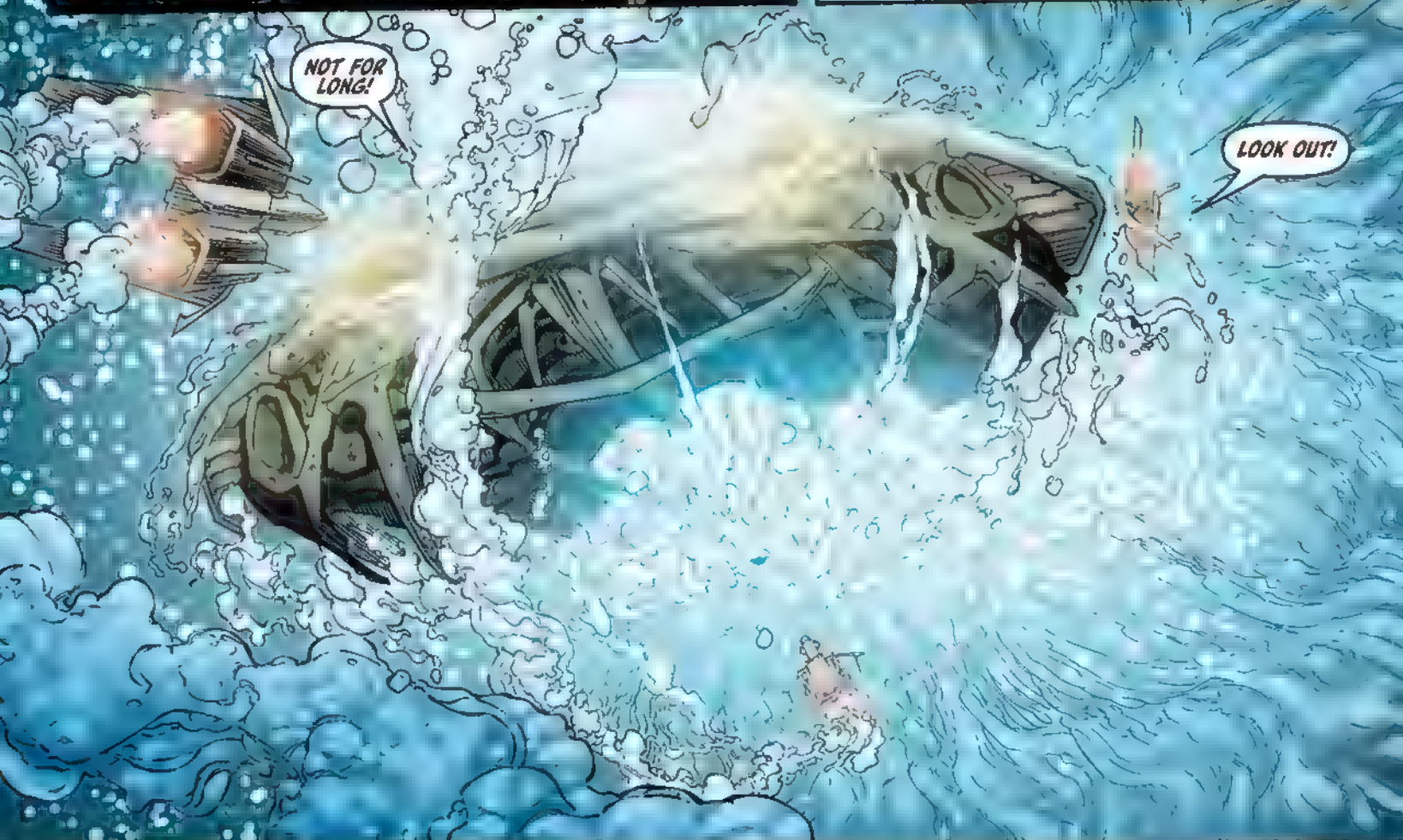
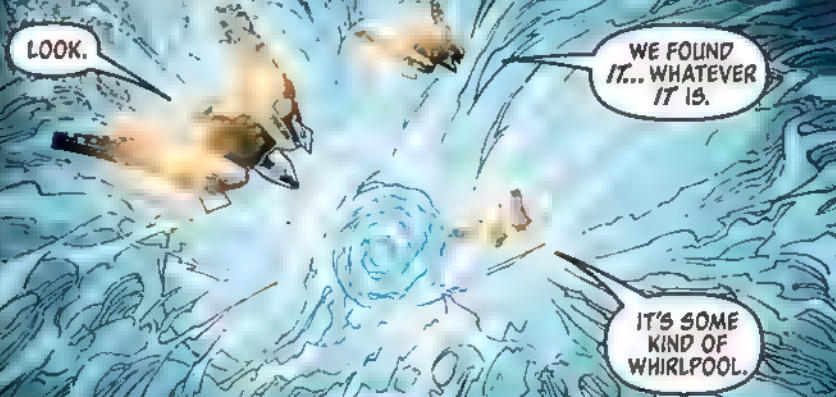
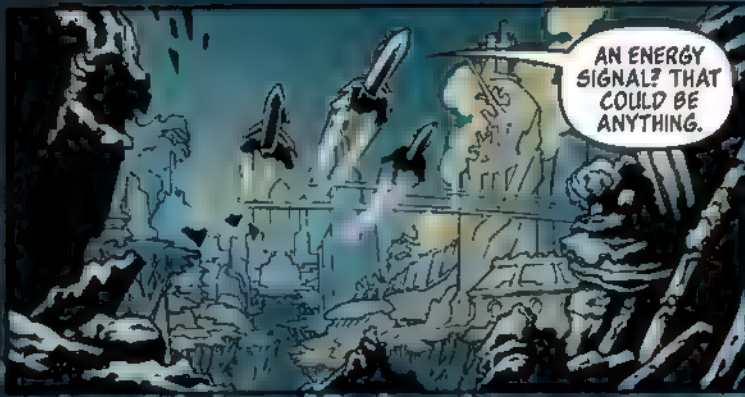


SIR, I'M
GETTING READINGS
ON AN ENERGY SIGNAL
OUTSIDE THE CITY. IT'S
LIKE NOTHING I'VE
EVER SEEN BEFORE.



WHAT'S THIS...
SOMETHING NEW?

SEND BRAVO
SQUADRON TO
CHECK IT OUT.





...WE ARE
TOO LATE.

THIS WAR COULD
VERY WELL BE THE
END OF US ALL.

ASPEN, WHERE ARE
YOU? WE NEED YOU.



ASPEN.

ASPEN...
WAKE UP.

I SAID
IT'S TIME TO
GET UP.

ARE YOU
HEARING ME,
ASPEN? COME
ON.

YOU GOT SWIM
PRACTICE IN TWENTY
MINUTES, AND I GO ON DUTY
IN FIFTEEN. SO UNLESS YOU
WANT TO WALK THERE, I
SUGGEST YOU GET YOUR
LITTLE BUTT MOVING.

I WISH I COULD BELIEVE THAT I
AM REALLY HERE, BACK IN SAN
DIEGO WITH CAPTAIN MATTHEWS,
THE MAN WHO RAISED ME SINCE
I WAS A LITTLE GIRL.

ASPEN...

BUT, I KNOW IT
IS NOT TRUE.

MY ENVIRONMENT BRINGS IT ALL BACK TO ME. I AM IN THE LAIR OF THE BLACK. MYTHIC FIGURES FROM THE PAST OF THE BLUE THAT SEEM TO BE AS REAL AS EVER.

THEY KIDNAPPED ME, AND DRESSED ME IN THIS BIZARRE OUTFIT.

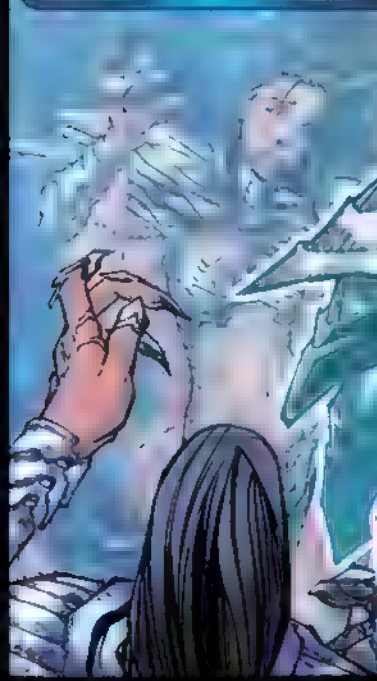
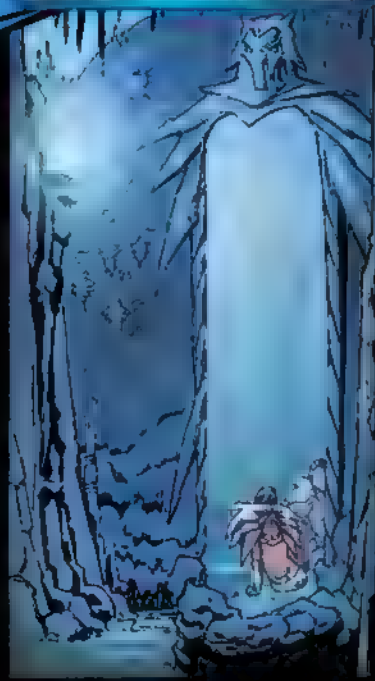
THIS IS WITHOUT A DOUBT THE STRANGEST THING THAT HAS EVER HAPPENED TO ME, AND GIVEN MY PAST, THAT'S SAYING A LOT.

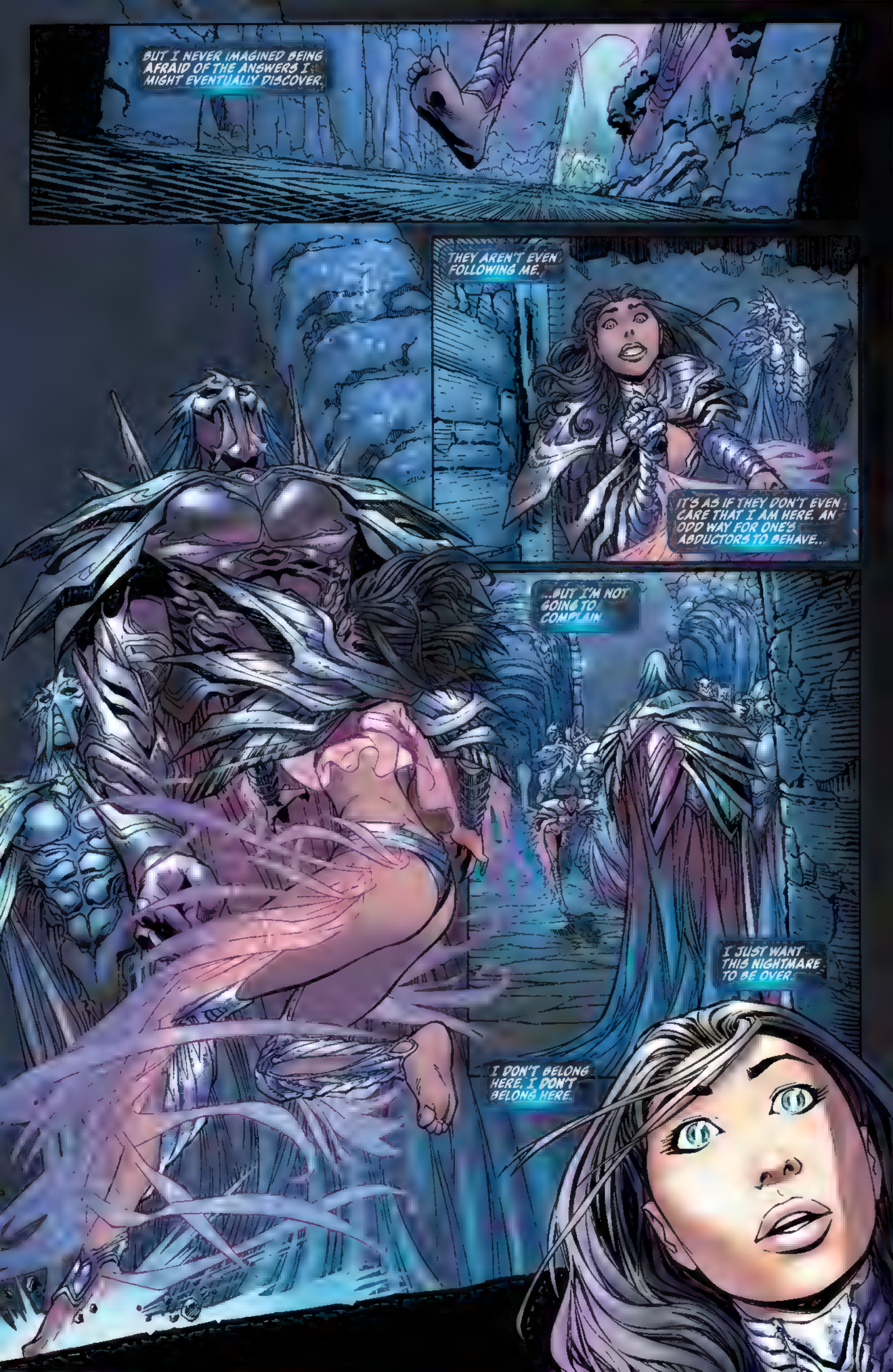
THE ASPEN EDITION.

FOR SO LONG, I COULDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT MY LIFE BEFORE TURNING UP ON THAT SHIP THE PARADISE. EVEN AFTER I CAME ACROSS THE BLUE AND LEARNED THE TRUTH ABOUT MY HISTORY, THAT I WAS ONE OF THEM... EVEN THEN IT WAS ALL A BLUR.

BUT SOMETHING ABOUT THESE BEINGS REMINDS ME OF MY CHILDHOOD WITH THE BLUE... AND REMINDS ME OF MY MOTHER.

I'VE ALWAYS YEARNED TO UNDERSTAND MY PLACE IN THIS WORLD, TO TRULY KNOW WHERE I CAME FROM, AND WHO I AM.





BUT I NEVER IMAGINED BEING
AFRAID OF THE ANSWERS I
MIGHT EVENTUALLY DISCOVER.

THEY AREN'T EVEN
FOLLOWING ME.

IT'S AS IF THEY DON'T EVEN
CARE THAT I AM HERE. AN
ODD WAY FOR ONE'S
ABDUCTORS TO BEHAVE...

...BUT I'M NOT
GOING TO
COMPLAIN.

I JUST WANT
THIS NIGHTMARE
TO BE OVER.

I DON'T BELONG
HERE. I DON'T
BELONG HERE.





CASQUET?

YES,
ASPEN, YOU
DO BELONG
HERE.

ASPEN
Vol. 2

#2
OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Two of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
story

KOI TURNBULL
pencils

JASON GORDER
inks

CHRISTINA STRAIN
colors

DREAMER DESIGN
letters

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I IMAGINE THAT I AM THE LAST PERSON YOU EXPECTED TO SEE DOWN HERE. BUT WHEN THE BLACK APPEARED ON THE BEACH, I KNEW I HAD TO GO WITH THEM. IT WAS THE ONLY WAY I COULD HOPE TO FIND YOU.

YOU MEAN YOU ARE ONE OF *THEM*? YOU ARE A *BLACK*?

IN A WORD... YES.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU? WHAT ARE THEY? WHAT DO THEY WANT WITH ME?

I HAD WANTED TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS UNDER CALMER CONDITIONS WHEN WE LAST SAW EACH OTHER.

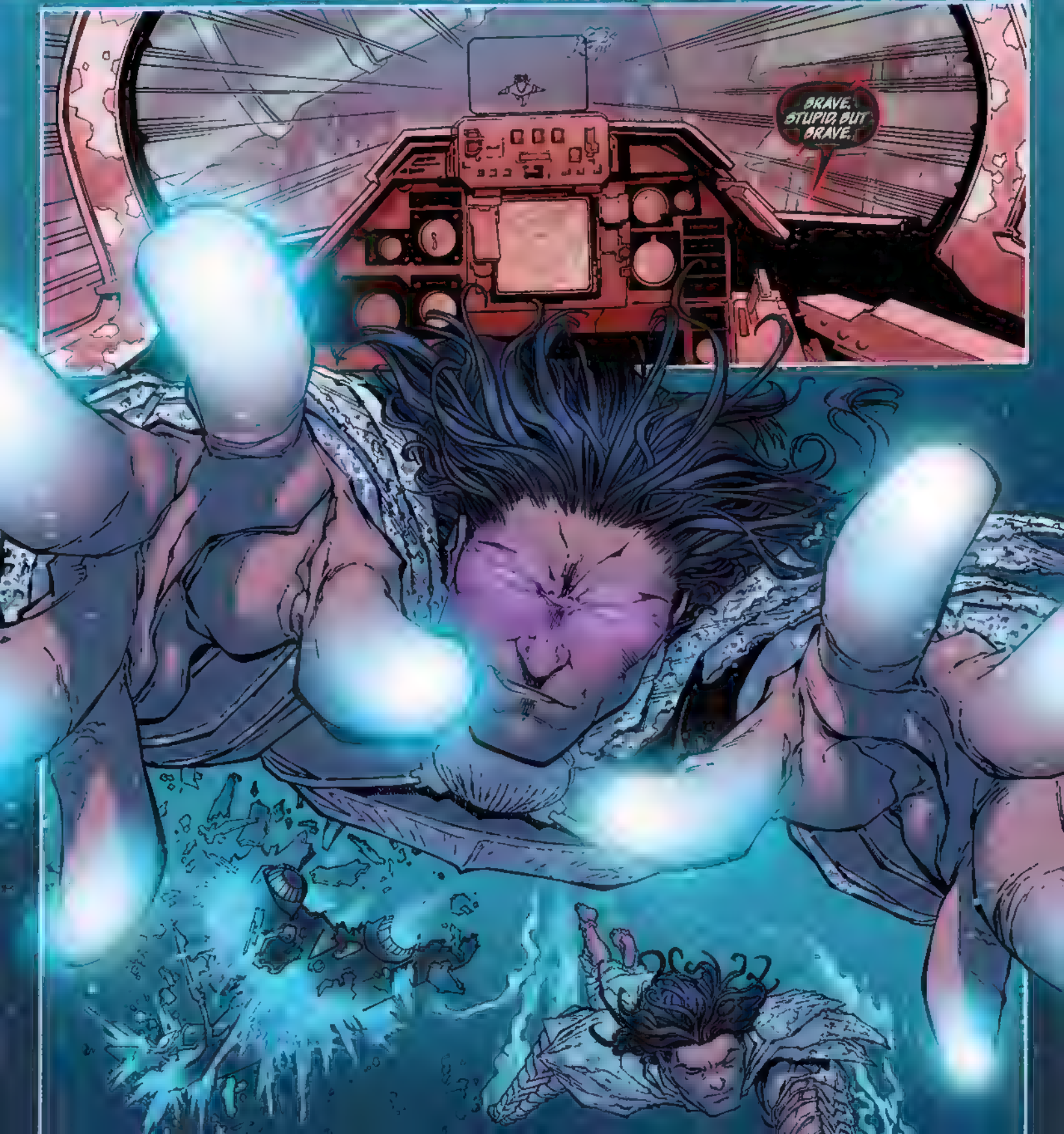
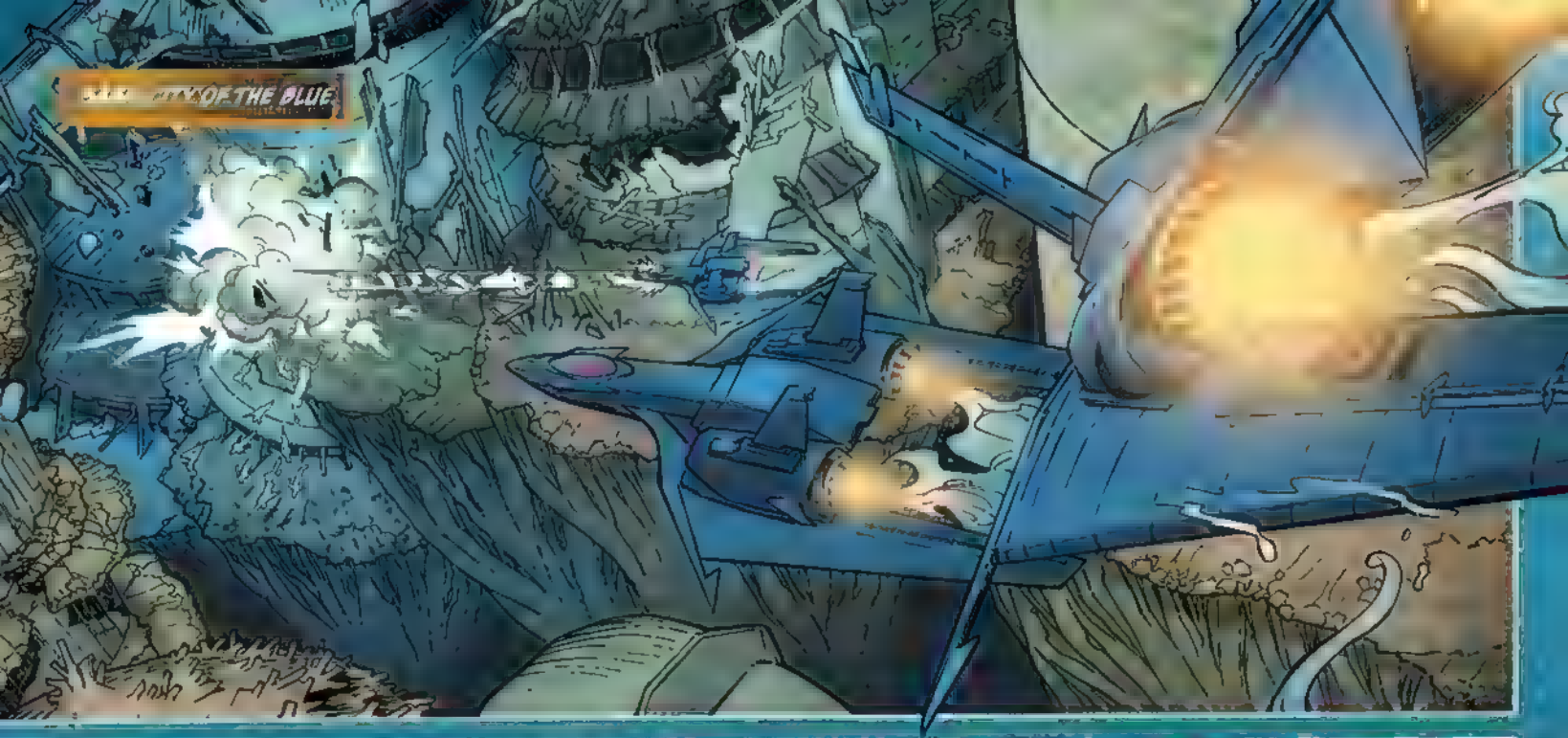
IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD FOR YOU TO WANDER ABOUT FOR SO LONG, WITHOUT TRULY KNOWING WHO YOU ARE OR WHERE YOU CAME FROM.

AND FOR THAT, I AM SORRY. BUT YOUR DAYS OF LIVING IN THE DARK ARE OVER...





THE TIME HAS
COME FOR ALL TO
BE REVEALED.

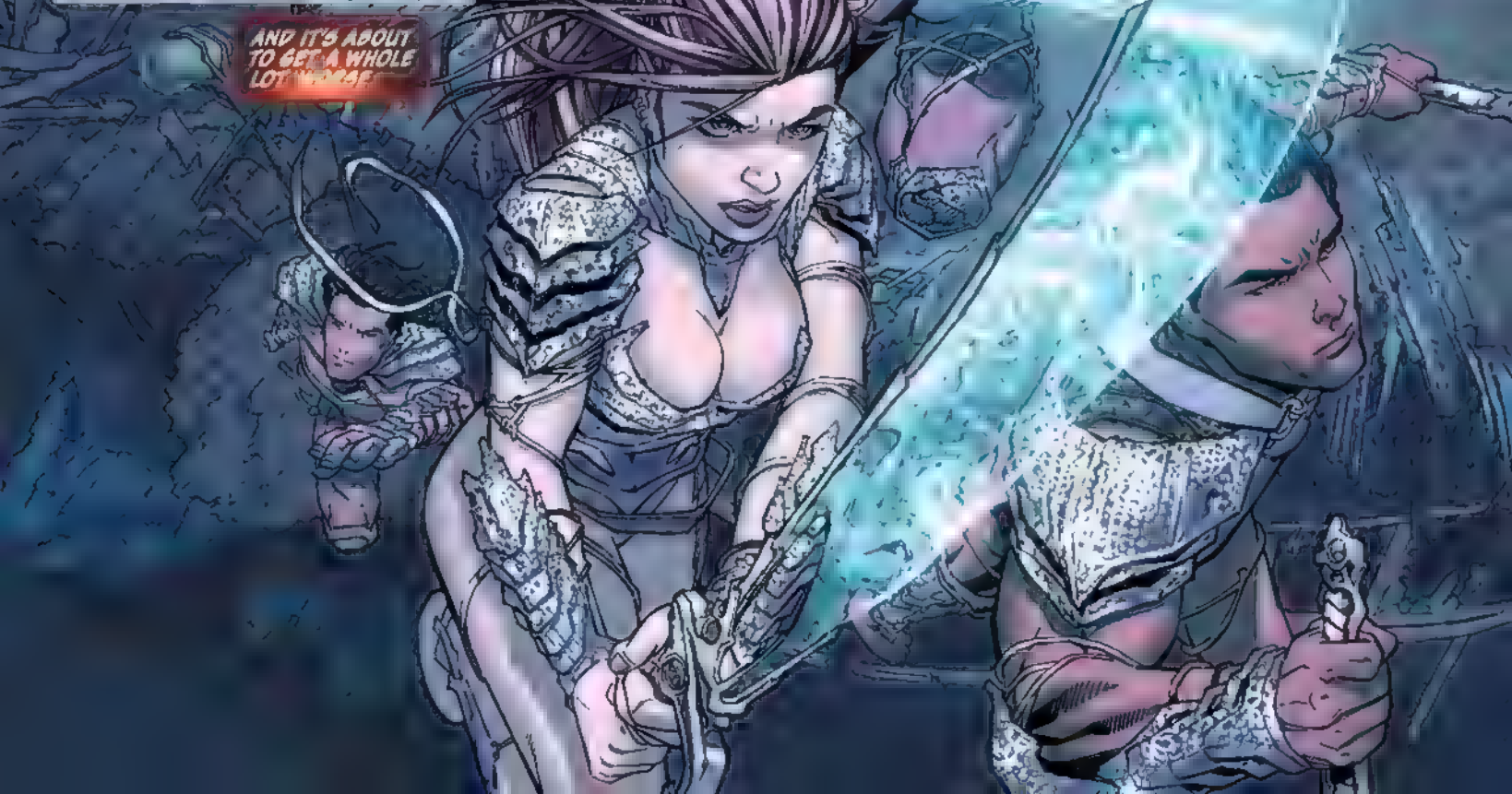




THIS IS WAR.



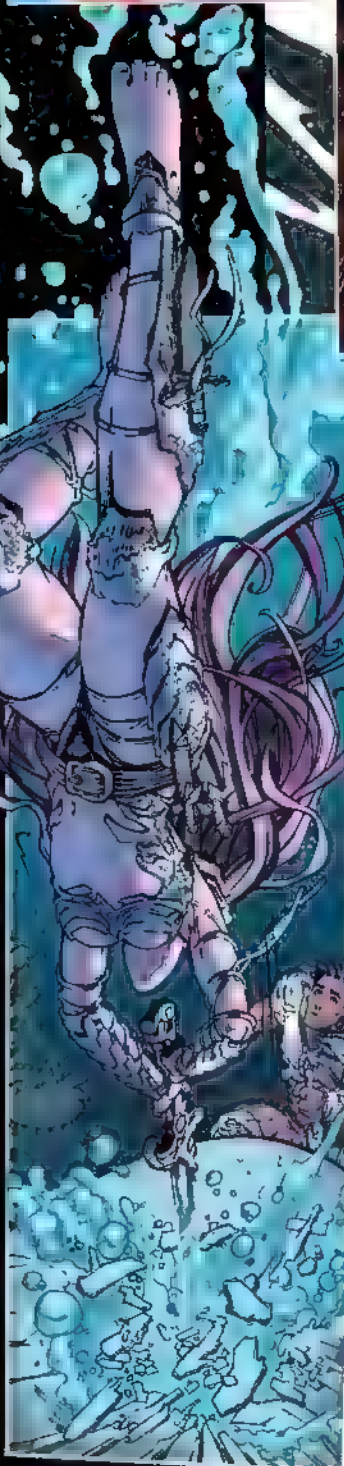
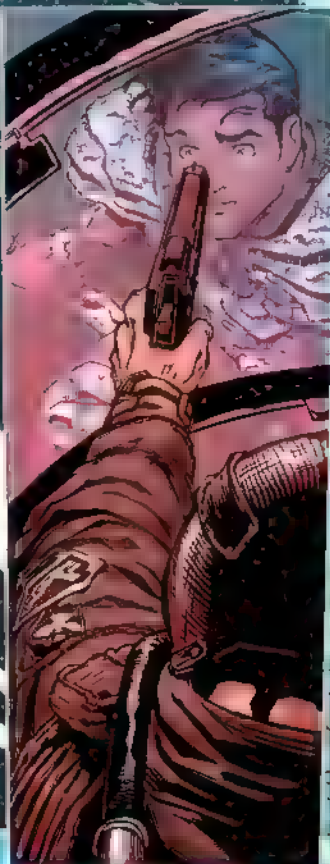
AND IT'S ABOUT
TO GET A WHOLE
LOT WORSE.





SOMETIMES DIPLOMACY
IS NOT AN OPTION AND
NEITHER IS RESTRAINT.

SOMETIMES USING
FULL FORCE IS THE
ONLY WAY TO SURVIVE.



THIS WAY.



THALASSAR,
ARE YOU OKAY?

HOW DO YOU
THINK, CANNON? MY
CITY IS UNDER SIEGE AND
WHAT YOU SEE HERE IS **ALL**
THAT REMAINS OF MY
FELLOW CITIZENS.

THIS IS IT?

I HAVE TO
ASSUME IF THERE
ARE ANY OTHERS,
THEY HAVE ALREADY
FLED THE SCENE OF
THIS CARNAGE... OR
THEY ARE **DEAD**

I'M SORRY WE
DIDN'T GET HERE
SOONER.

ANYTHING,
KIANI?

STILL CLEAR,
BUT WHO KNOWS
FOR HOW LONG.

IT DOESN'T
LOOK LIKE THERE
ARE MANY PLACES
LEFT TO HIDE.

NOW THAT REINFORCEMENTS HAVE
ARRIVED, WE MUST DEVELOP AN
ATTACK PLAN. GOING AFTER ONE
SHIP AT A TIME IS POINTLESS. WE
WILL STRIKE WITH PRECISION AT
THE VERY HEART OF OUR ENEMY'S
FORCES. THEY **WILL** PAY FOR WHAT
THEY HAVE DONE.

THALASSAR,
WAIT.

OUT THERE IN
THE OPEN, HOW FAR DO
YOU THINK WE WILL GET
BEFORE THEY CATCH US?
OUR SHIPS AREN'T FAST
ENOUGH TO GET AWAY.

I'LL GET YOU
TO SAFETY.

I DIDN'T COME
TO SAVE THE CITY. I
CAME TO GET YOU
OUT OF HERE.

I WILL NOT
LET MY CITY
FALL.

YOU ARE FOCUSING
ON THE WRONG THING.
BUILDINGS DO NOT MAKE A
CITY, THALASSAR. IT IS THE
PEOPLE. LOOK AROUND YOU.
SAVE YOUR **PEOPLE**, AND YOU
WILL SAVE YOUR **CITY**.

BEFORE ALL ELSE,
THERE WAS A GREAT
NOTHINGNESS, AN AREA
OF BLACKNESS THAT COULD
NOT EVEN BE CALLED SPACE.
THERE THEN APPEARED A
GREAT SOMETHING TO
FILL THE VOID.

A SPARK...

...A PLANET...

...WATER...

...LIFE.

OVER THE COURSE
OF TIME, ENERGY GREW,
MATTER COLLIDED AND
FORMS TOOK SHAPE. ON THIS
PLANET, LIFE BEGAN NOT ON THE
SURFACE UNDER THE WATCHFUL
EYE OF THE NEAREST STAR,
BUT UNDER THE SURFACE IN
THE WATER.

IT EXPANDED,
TRANSFORMING INTO A
HOST OF FORMS. FROM LIFE
CAME MORE LIFE. WHERE ONE
FORM WAS, TWO FORMS
BECAME. SUCH WAS THE
CASE WITH THE CREATION
OF THE BLUE AND THE
HUMANS.

EACH
BRANCHED OFF
FROM THE SAME
FORM, BUT ULTIMATELY
TRAVELED ALONG VERY
DIFFERENT PATHS.

TWO FORMS...
TWO PATHS... TWO
WORLDS.

ONE ABOVE
AND ONE
BELOW.

THIS IS
INCREDIBLE...





AND THE
BLACK?

AGAIN...
DIFFERENT LIFE, BUT
ALSO COMING FROM THE
SAME POINT OF ORIGIN.
WHEREAS THE BLUE FOUND
THEIR PLACE CENTRALLY IN THE
OCEANS, THE BLACK WENT
DEEPER, REACHING TOWARD
THE VERY BOTTOM-- MOVING
AS CLOSE TO THE CENTER
OF THE CREATION AS
POSSIBLE.



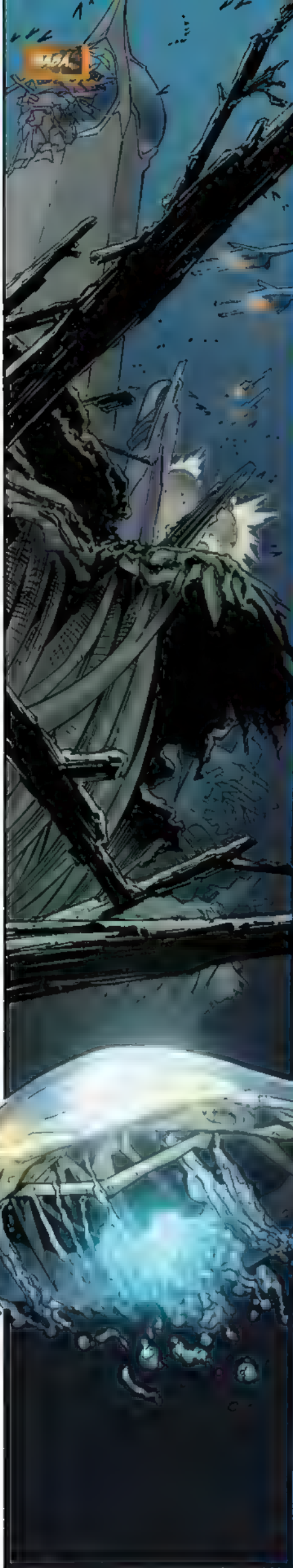
YOU KNOW,
MANY OF THE
HUMANS THINK WE
ARE SOME KIND OF
ALIEN RACE. THOSE
THAT KNOW OF US,
ANYWAY.

I AM NOT SURPRISED.
HUMANS HAVE A TENDENCY
TO FOCUS ON THE *DIFFERENCES*
RATHER THAN THE SIMILARITIES. IT
WOULD MAKE IT HARDER FOR THEM
TO TREAT US AS THEY DO IF THE
HUMANS ACKNOWLEDGED THE
LINK BETWEEN US.

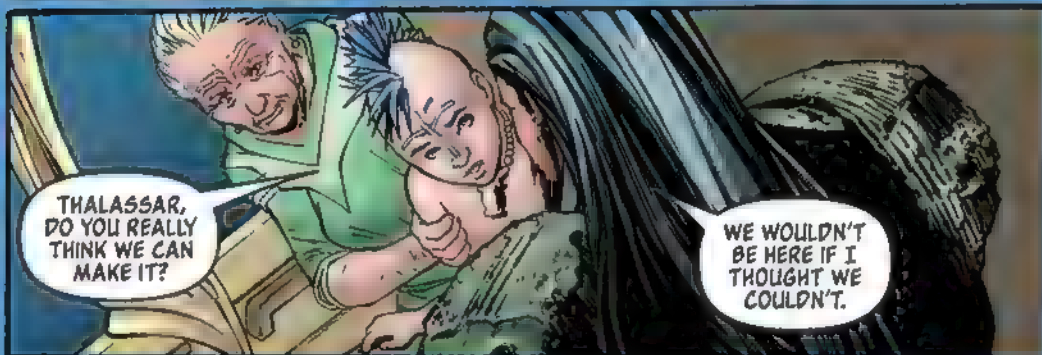


SO WHERE DO
I FIT INTO ALL
OF THIS?

ASPEN, YOU
ARE SOMETHING
ELSE ALTOGETHER.



EVERYONE
RELAX. WE'RE
GOING TO BE
OKAY.



THALASSAR,
DO YOU REALLY
THINK WE CAN
MAKE IT?

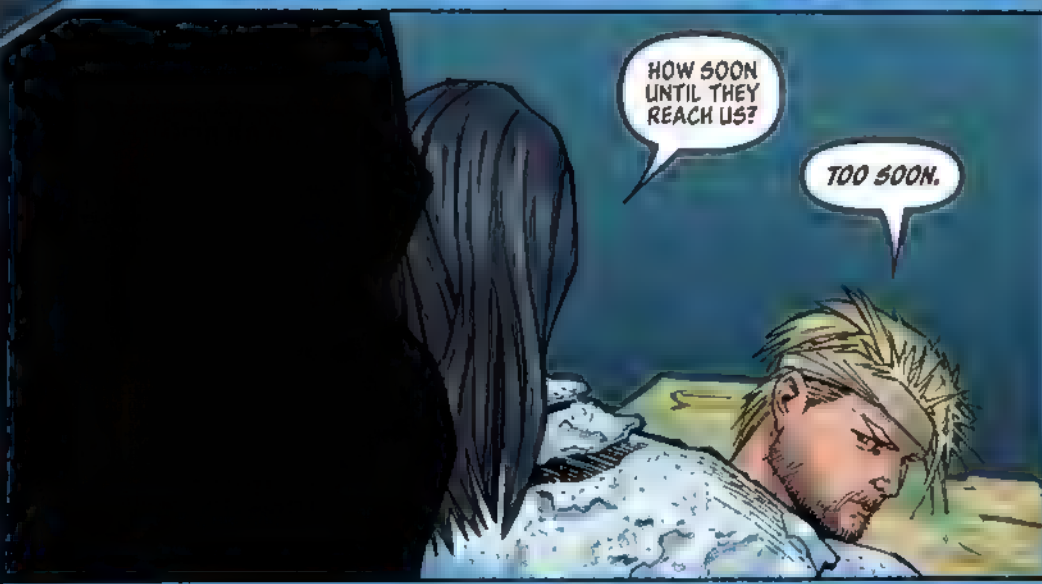
WE WOULDN'T
BE HERE IF I
THOUGHT WE
COULDN'T.



THIS IS *CRAZY*.
WE WON'T SURVIVE
LONG IN THESE OPEN
WATERS.

TRUST ME,
THALASSAR. WE
WON'T BE EXPOSED
FOR MUCH LONGER.

CANNON, I'M
PICKING UP SOMETHING
ON THE REAR SCANNERS.
THREE FIGHTERS
APPROACHING FAST.



HOW SOON
UNTIL THEY
REACH US?

TOO SOON.



KIANI, MAINTAIN YOUR COURSE. I'LL GIVE YOU SOME BREATHING ROOM, BUT IT'S GOING TO BE UP TO YOU TO MANEUVER THROUGH THE HYDROPORT. CAN YOU HANDLE IT?

I THINK SO.



WAIT, I SHOULD BE THE ONE TO GO. THESE PEOPLE ARE MY RESPONSIBILITY.

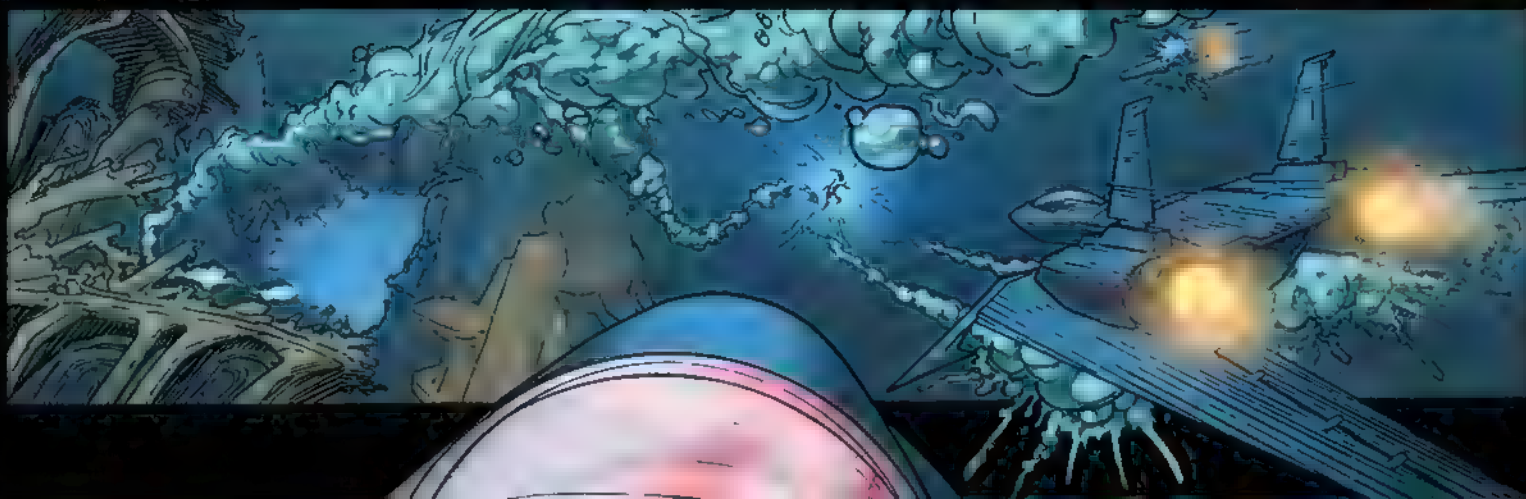
EXACTLY. WHICH IS WHY YOU ARE STAYING WITH THEM.



TIME IS RUNNING OUT. WHOEVER IS GOING BETTER GO.

CANNON, WE WILL NOT FORGET WHAT YOU ALL HAVE DONE THIS DAY.

JUST AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER. I NEED SOMETHING TO HOLD OVER YOUR HEAD.





MAYBE THIS WASN'T
SUCH A GOOD IDEA.



I HOPE THEY MAKE IT
THROUGH. WHAT AM I SAYING,
I HOPE I MAKE IT THROUGH.

PHONE



I COULD HAVE SWORN
I SAW SOMEONE THERE.

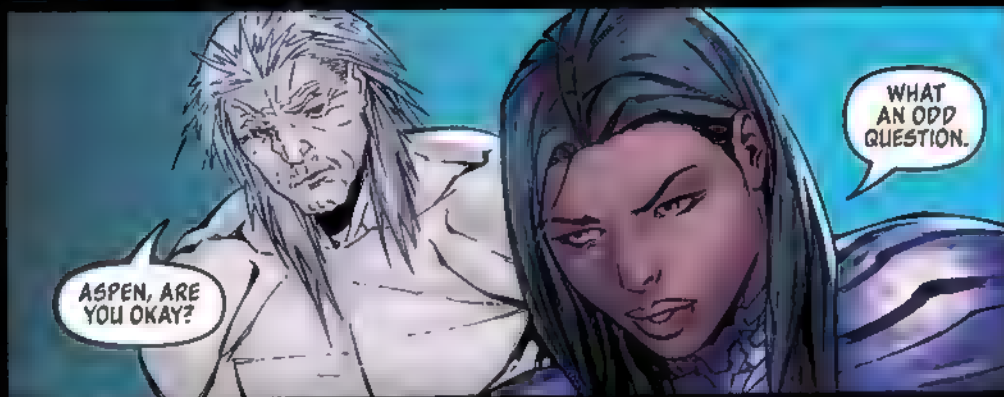
NOBODY HAS EVER TRIED
USING THE HYDROPORT
WITHOUT A SHIP, BUT I
GUESS THERE IS A FIRST
TIME FOR EVERYTHING.
BESIDES, STICKING
AROUND HERE SEEMS
LIKE A GOOD IDEA.

POOR LITTLE CANNON,
AFRAID TO GO FORWARD,
AFRAID TO GO BACK.

SHUT UP.

SHOULDN'T
WE FOLLOW
HIM?

BE MY GUEST.
I'M NOT GOING
INTO THAT THING. WHO
KNOWS WHAT THE
HELL IT WOULD DO
TO OUR SHIPS.



ASPEN, ARE YOU OKAY?

WHAT AN ODD QUESTION.

MY LIFE IS NOTHING BUT A MISH-MASH OF FORGOTTEN MEMORIES AND SECONDHAND ACCOUNTS. I WANT TO BELIEVE YOU, CASQUE. BUT THIS ALL FEELS THE WAY IT DID WHEN CANNON TOLD ME HOW I ENDED UP ON THAT SHIP... THE PARADISE.

A BROTHER I COULD NOT EVEN REMEMBER AND I WERE RUNNING FROM KILLIAN, THE MAN THAT KILLED OUR PARENTS. WHEN THAT BRIGHT LIGHT CAME, I THOUGHT IT WAS ONE OF THE WEAPONS FROM HIS SHIP. BUT IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE.

I REMEMBER SEEING THE LOOK ON MY BROTHER'S FACE. HE HAD THE MOST FRIGHTENED EYES I HAD EVER SEEN.

THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW HIM.



WHY DID HE DO IT? WHY DID KILLIAN KILL MY PARENTS?

FOR THE SAME REASON HE EVENTUALLY RECRUITED YOU FOR HIS CAUSE. HE LEARNED OF YOUR TRUE HERITAGE, AND KNEW OF THE POWER YOU MIGHT POSSESS. POWER HE WANTED TO MANIPULATE FOR HIS OWN ENDEAVORS.

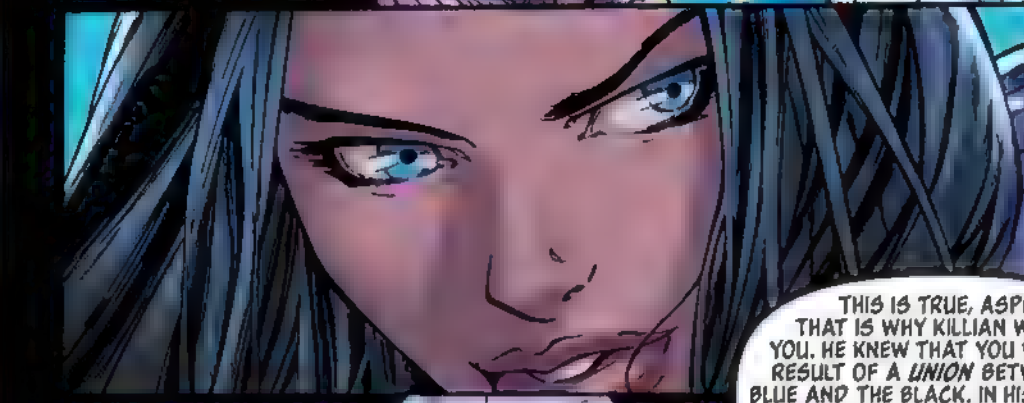


MY HERITAGE?
YOU MEAN THAT MY
FATHER WAS **NOT**
A BLUE.

YOU KNOW?

JUST BEFORE THE
BLACK KIDNAPPED ME, I
DREAMED OF A CHILDHOOD
MEMORY ALL BUT LOST TO ME. I SAW
MY MOTHER TALKING SECRETLY WITH A
FIGURE WEARING ARMOR SIMILAR TO
THAT OF THE BLACK. THEY NEVER
EVEN KNEW I WAS THERE.

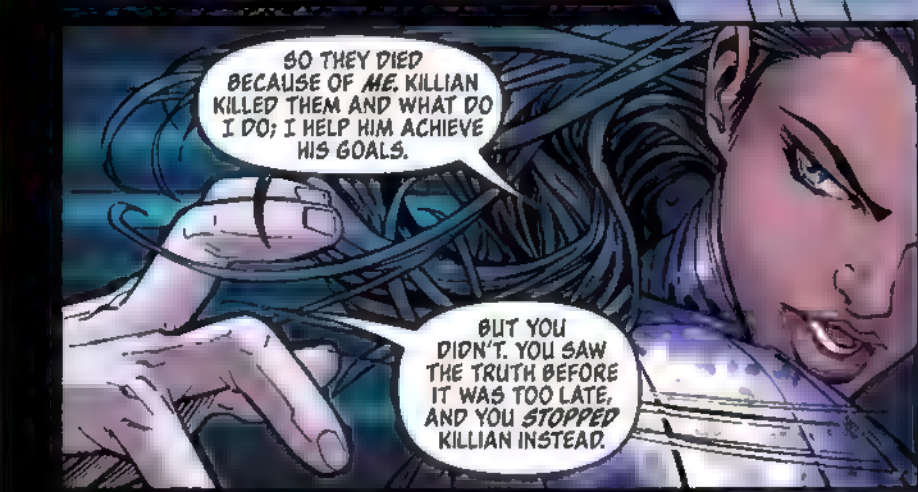
I COULDN'T
HEAR THEIR
WHISPERS, BUT
I KNEW THEIR
SECRET...



HE WAS MY
FATHER... ONE OF
THE BLACK.



THIS IS TRUE, ASPEN.
THAT IS WHY KILLIAN WANTED
YOU. HE KNEW THAT YOU WERE THE
RESULT OF A UNION BETWEEN THE
BLUE AND THE BLACK. IN HIS MIND, YOU
WERE THE DAUGHTER OF A MORTAL
AND OF A GOD FOR THAT IS HOW
THE BLACK ARE PERCEIVED BY
MANY OF THE BLUE.



SO THEY DIED
BECAUSE OF ME. KILLIAN
KILLED THEM AND WHAT DO
I DO; I HELP HIM ACHIEVE
HIS GOALS.

BUT YOU
DIDN'T. YOU SAW
THE TRUTH BEFORE
IT WAS TOO LATE,
AND YOU STOPPED
KILLIAN INSTEAD.



NONE OF THAT
CHANGES THE FACT
THAT YOUR MOTHER IS
GONE. BUT YOU STILL
HAVE FAMILY, ASPEN.

WHAT ARE
YOU SAYING?

WOULD YOU
LIKE TO MEET YOUR
FATHER?



I KNEW THE HYDROPORTS WERE A NATURAL PHENOMENON, BENDING DISTANCE AS WELL AS TIME, BUT I HAD NO IDEA THAT THEY WERE SO VAST. IT LOOKS LIKE MILES AND MILES OF OPEN SPACE, BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE, ISN'T IT?

ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?

MOST DEFINITELY NOT. I WAS NOT TALKING TO YOU, TARAS.

FACE IT, CANNON. I SAVED YOUR ASS. I GOT MORE POWER THAN YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH.

OH, YEAH. THEN WHY WAS IT YOUR ASS THAT WAS TOSSED INTO THE BLUE SUN?

OKAY, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT ONE. YOU GOT THE BEST OF ME BACK THEN, BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, I WAS DOWN BUT NOT OUT.

NEXT TIME, YOU'LL BE THE ONE LOST, CANNON.

THERE'S THE OPENING I'M LOOKING FOR.

YOU HEAR ME, CANNON?

THIS CONVERSATION IS OVER.

MAYBE IT'S JUST ME, BUT I'M SENSING SOME HOSTILITY FROM YOU.

I HAVE TO CONCENTRATE AND STAY FOCUSED. OTHERWISE, I'LL NEVER FIND MY WAY OUT OF HERE.

INSTEAD OF GIVING ME THE COLD SHOULDER, HOW ABOUT A THANK YOU FOR HELPING YOU OUT BACK THERE?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

DON'T PLAY DUMB, SINCE WHEN DO YOU KNOW HOW TO TRANSFORM WATER INTO ITS SOLID FORM?



MADE IT.

MY HEAD IS THROBBING, BUT
I CAN'T TELL IF IT WAS FROM
THE JOURNEY OR MY
UNWANTED PASSENGER.
WHATEVER THE CASE, TARAS
SEEMS TO BE GONE FOR NOW.



BUT WHERE IS
EVERYONE ELSE?

CANNON...

KRREG

I AM SORRY
TO BE THE ONE
DOING THIS, BUT WE
ALL HAVE OUR
DUTIES.

CANNON, FOR
VIOLATING THE
MANDATE OF THE
COUNCIL, I AM HEREBY
PLACING YOU UNDER
ARREST.

TO BE
CONTINUED...



VOL. 2

#3

OF 11

COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Three of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER

story

KOI TURNBULL

pencils

JASON GORDER & SAL REGLA

inks

CHRISTINA STRAIN

colors

DREAMER DESIGN

letters

Digital Editor: FRANK MASTROMAURO; VINCE HERNANDEZ Digital Lettering: JOSH REED, MARK ROBLAN, PETER STEIGERWALD Covering Artist: STEVE PEE/DREAMER DESIGN

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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM™ Vol. 2 Issue 3

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FOR THE BETTER PART OF
MY LIFE, I HAVE SERVED
THE CITY OF MURIA.

MORE THAN JUST BEING THE
CAPITAL CITY, MURIA IS THE
LIFE FORCE OF OUR PEOPLE, A
BEACON FOR US WE ARE AND
ALL THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED.

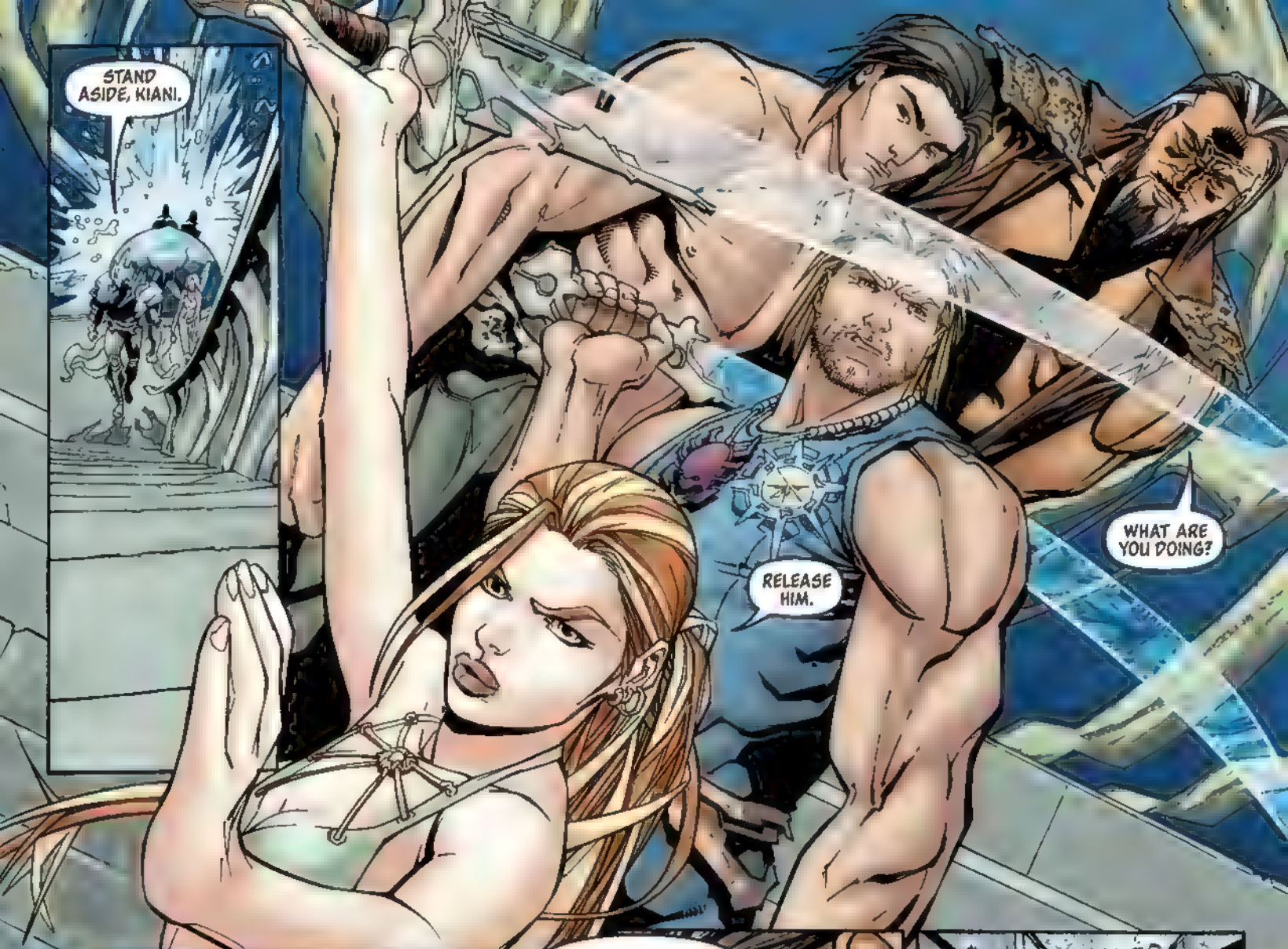
OVER THE YEARS,
MY RETURN HAS
ALWAYS BROUGHT
ME A RENEWED
SENSE OF HOPE.

THAT WAS...



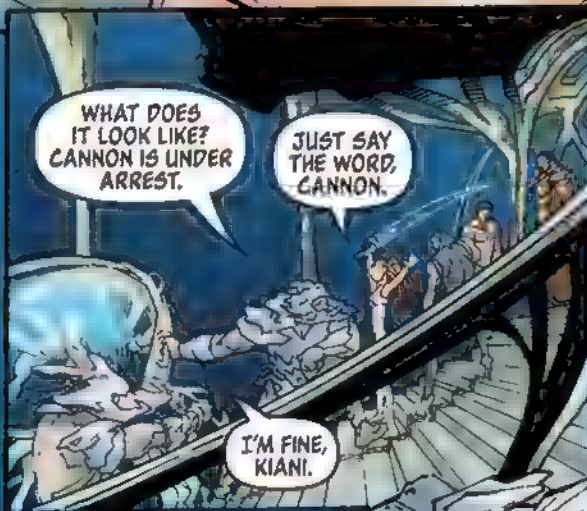


STAND
ASIDE, KIANI.



RELEASE
HIM.

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING?



WHAT DOES
IT LOOK LIKE?
CANNON IS UNDER
ARREST.

JUST SAY
THE WORD,
CANNON.

I'M FINE,
KIANI.

THIS DOESN'T MAKE
ANY SENSE. MY CITY WAS
DESTROYED, AND IF IT
WASN'T FOR CANNON AND
THE OTHERS WE MIGHT
ALL BE DEAD.

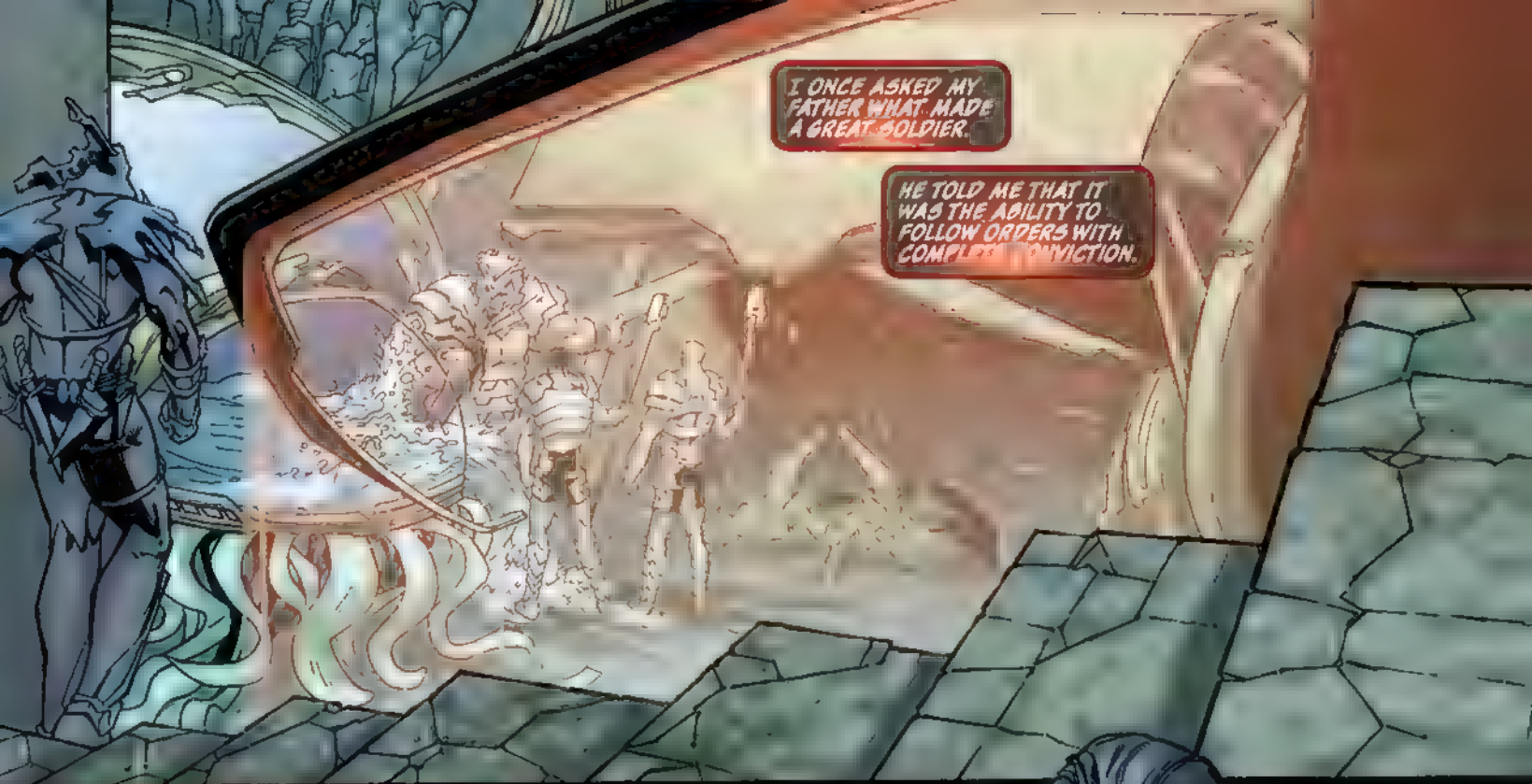


I HAVE
MY ORDERS
DIRECTLY FROM
THE COUNCIL.



IF YOU HAVE
ISSUES WITH THEIR
DECISION, TAKE IT UP
WITH THEM.

DON'T WORRY,
WE WILL.



I ONCE ASKED MY FATHER WHAT MADE A GREAT SOLDIER.

HE TOLD ME THAT IT WAS THE ABILITY TO FOLLOW ORDERS WITH COMPLETE CONVICTION.

WHEN I ASKED HIM ABOUT BEING A GREAT LEADER, HE SAID THAT IT WAS KNOWING WHEN TO GIVE YOUR OWN ORDERS AND LEARNING TO HANDLE THE CONSEQUENCES WITH THAT SAME CONVICTION.

I DON'T SEE MUCH CHOICE IN LIVING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES. THAT DECISION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN MADE FOR ME.



AS FAR AS THE CONVICTION GOES, WILL I EVER KNOW IF I DID THE RIGHT THING?



THIS IS GETTING A
BIT RIDICULOUS.

I MEAN, HOW
MANY FATHERS
CAN I HAVE?

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS
RAISED ME ON THE
SURFACE WHEN HE FOUND
ME ABOARD THE PARADISE.
THEN, THERE WAS THE MAN
MARRIED TO MY MOTHER IN
THE WORLD OF THE BLUE.*

*SEE THE FATHOM BLUE
DESCENT MINI-SERIES.

AND NOW THE LATEST...
APPARENTLY MY BIRTH
FATHER IS A MEMBER OF
THIS DARK AND BROODING
RACE CALLED THE BLACK.

HALLMARK WOULD
MAKE A FORTUNE ON
ME COME FATHER'S DAY.

CASQUE?

NO,
ASPEN...



I DO NOT
REMEMBER YOU
LIKE THIS.

BUT I DO
REMEMBER YOUR
ARMOR AND THIS
MASK YOU
WEAR.

*YOU CAME TO SEE MY
MOTHER. I SAW YOU THEN...
AND I JUST KNEW. THE
WAY SHE TOUCHED YOU.

"THE WAY YOU BOTH
LOOKED AT ME."

YOU HAVE
HER EYES.

...MY NAME
IS RANGER. I
AM YOUR
FATHER.



DO YOU OFTEN
GO AROUND
ABDUCTING YOUR
LONG-LOST
DAUGHTERS?

OUR RELATIONSHIP
WITH THE REST OF THE
WORLD IS STRAINED. WE SURVIVE
BY CONCEALMENT AND RARELY
VENTURE BEYOND OUR REALM. I
COULD NOT SIMPLY WALK INTO THE
WORLD OF THE BLUE, OR ASHORE
FOR THAT MATTER, AND CALL
OUT TO YOU.

WHY NOT?

ASPEN...

I JUST DON'T
KNOW HOW YOU
EXPECT ME TO FEEL
ABOUT ALL OF THIS.
I DON'T EVEN
KNOW YOU.

I UNDERSTAND. I
CANNOT CHANGE WHAT HAS
HAPPENED TO YOU OVER THE
YEARS. YOUR MOTHER AND I HAD
YOU IN SECRET, BUT THERE WAS NO
WAY FOR US TO BE TOGETHER. IN THE
END, WE DECIDED IT WOULD BE BEST
FOR YOU TO STAY WITH HER. BUT I
AM YOUR FATHER AND YOU
ARE MY DAUGHTER.

SO WHY WAIT
UNTIL NOW TO
COME FOR ME?
I'M ASSUMING
I HAVEN'T BEEN
EXACTLY FLYING
BELOW YOUR
RADAR.

OUR WORLD IS
IN PERIL, AND YOU
ARE NEEDED.

LIKE US, YOU ARE
A BEING OF THE WATER.
WHILE EVERY CREATURE ON
THE PLANET RECEIVES THEIR
LIFE THROUGH THE WATER,
NONE ARE CONNECTED TO
IT LIKE THE BLACK.

UNFORTUNATELY, THESE
PRIMITIVE FORMS-- THESE
HUMANS-- FAIL TO GRASP THE
SYMBIOTIC NATURE OF THEIR
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WATER AROUND
THEM. THEIR EVERY ACTION WORKS
TOWARD THEIR OWN DESTRUCTION...
AND OURS. WE CANNOT ALLOW
THEM TO CONTINUE.

THE TIME HAS
COME ONCE AGAIN
FOR THEM TO LEARN
THE ERRORS OF
THEIR WAYS.



FALCON
FOUR... YOU
PICKING UP
ANYTHING?



NEGATIVE.

HE'S GOTTA
BE OUT HERE
SOMEWHERE.

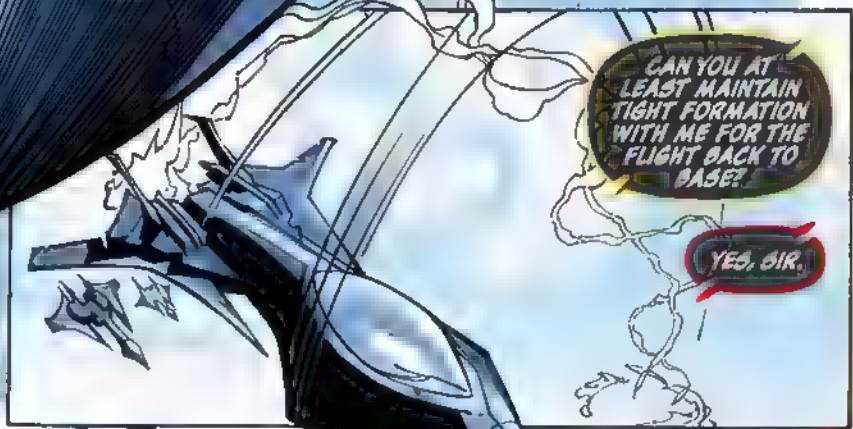
HE IS...



DAMMIT.

I AM.

MAYBE YOU
DIDN'T REALIZE
IT, BUT IN THIS
EXERCISE YOU WERE
SUPPOSED TO FIND
THE JOKER. NOT
THE OTHER WAY
AROUND.



CAN YOU AT
LEAST MAINTAIN
TIGHT FORMATION
WITH ME FOR THE
FLIGHT BACK TO
BASE?

YES, SIR.



IT ISN'T EASY... TRAINING THESE GUYS WELL ENOUGH THAT THEY CAN TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES, BUT NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO BE A THREAT TO CANNON'S PEOPLE.

I WONDER HOW LONG I'LL BE ABLE TO FEIGN ALLEGIANCE HERE AS I TRY TO GET A LEAD ON LOCATING ASPEN.



HOPEFULLY NOT AS LONG AS IT WILL TAKE MAYLANDER TO FINISH HIS WAR.



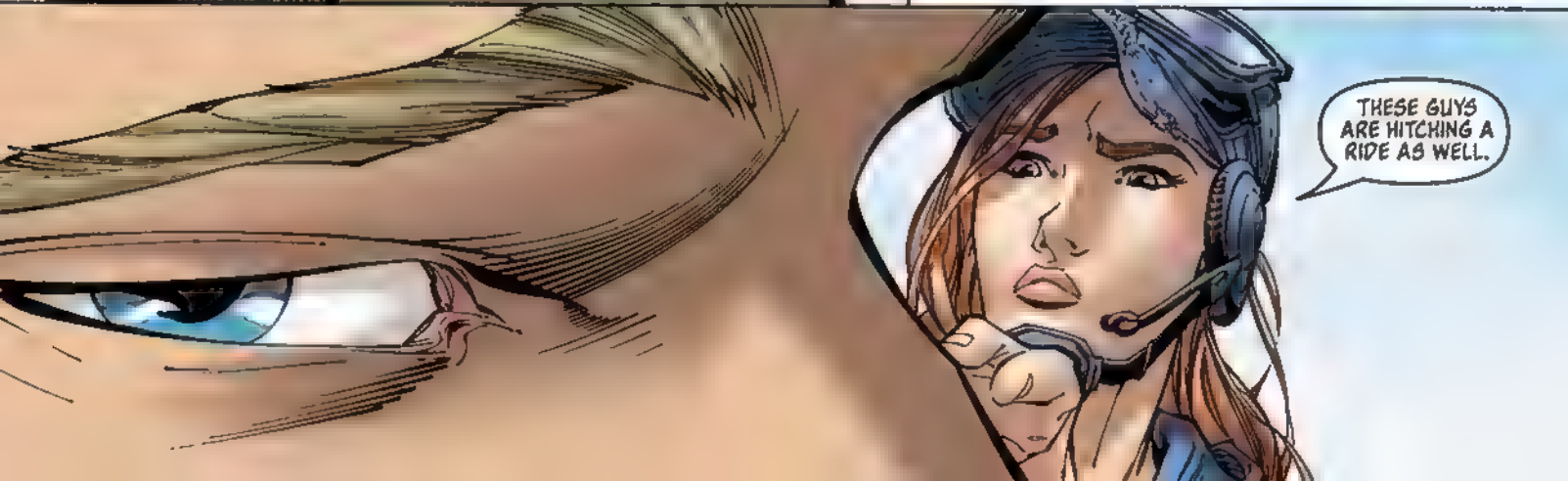
DENSMORE, WHERE YOU HEADED?

THE ARIZONA. MAYLANDER IS EXTENDING MANEUVERS.



THINGS MUST BE GOING WELL IF HE'S CALLING FOR SUPPLIES.

THAT AIN'T ALL.



THESE GUYS ARE HITCHING A RIDE AS WELL.



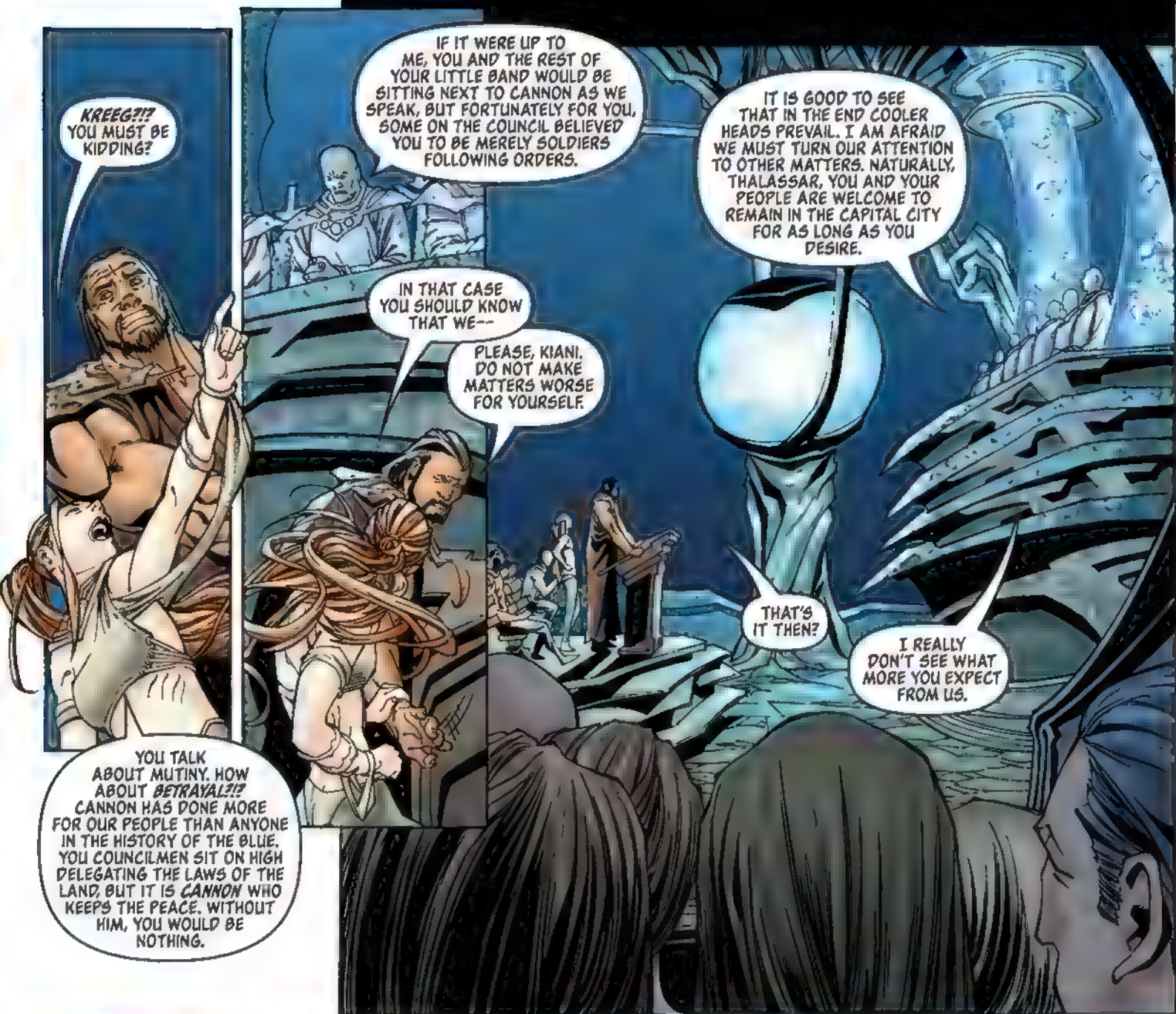
THAT IS
UNACCEPTABLE!

PLEASE,
THALASSAR, ORDINANCES
REGARDING SETTLEMENT
BEYOND OUR ESTABLISHED
TERRITORIES ARE QUITE CLEAR.
WE CANNOT INTERVENE WITH
MILITARY AID EVEN TO CITIES
AS DELOVED AS SABA.

DON'T HIDE BEHIND
MANDATES PRESCRIBED
MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS
AGO. THE LAWS YOU ARE
REFERRING TO WERE DESIGNED TO
KEEP OVERZEALOUS CHANCELLORS
FROM INFRINGING UPON OTHER
SOVEREIGNTIES IN THE
NAME OF MURIA.

**WE WERE
ATTACKED!** MANY OF
MY PEOPLE DIED AND
MORE WOULD HAVE WERE IT
NOT FOR CANNON'S ACTIONS.
HE SAVED OUR LIVES... AND
YOU REPAY HIM WITH
INCARCERATION.

THAT'S ENOUGH. LET US FORGET
THAT CANNON'S ACTIONS MAY HAVE
PUT THE ENTIRE POPULATION IN
JEOPARDY; HE DIRECTLY DISOBEYED
THE WILL OF THIS COUNCIL. HIS
INTENTIONS ARE IRRELEVANT. HIS
ACTIONS WERE NOTHING SHORT OF
MUTINY, AND HE WILL BE DEALT WITH
ACCORDINGLY. IN THE INTERIM,
KREEG SHALL FUNCTION AS THE
ELITE COMMANDER OF COUNCIL
DEFENSE.



KREEG??!
YOU MUST BE
KIDDING?

IF IT WERE UP TO
ME, YOU AND THE REST OF
YOUR LITTLE BAND WOULD BE
SITTING NEXT TO CANNON AS WE
SPEAK, BUT FORTUNATELY FOR YOU,
SOME ON THE COUNCIL BELIEVED
YOU TO BE MERELY SOLDIERS
FOLLOWING ORDERS.

IN THAT CASE
YOU SHOULD KNOW
THAT WE--

PLEASE, KIANI.
DO NOT MAKE
MATTERS WORSE
FOR YOURSELF.

IT IS GOOD TO SEE
THAT IN THE END COOLER
HEADS PREVAIL. I AM AFRAID
WE MUST TURN OUR ATTENTION
TO OTHER MATTERS. NATURALLY,
THALASSAR, YOU AND YOUR
PEOPLE ARE WELCOME TO
REMAIN IN THE CAPITAL CITY
FOR AS LONG AS YOU
DESIRE.

THAT'S
IT THEN?

I REALLY
DON'T SEE WHAT
MORE YOU EXPECT
FROM US.

YOU TALK
ABOUT MUTINY. HOW
ABOUT BETRAYAL??!
CANNON HAS DONE MORE
FOR OUR PEOPLE THAN ANYONE
IN THE HISTORY OF THE BLUE.
YOU COUNCILMEN SIT ON HIGH
DELEGATING THE LAWS OF THE
LAND, BUT IT IS CANNON WHO
KEEPS THE PEACE. WITHOUT
HIM, YOU WOULD BE
NOTHING.



NO, YOU
DON'T SEE.
THAT IS QUITE
CLEAR.



YOU'RE WASTING
YOUR BREATH ON THEM,
THALASSAR. THE COUNCIL
DOES NOT RESPOND TO THE
OPINIONS OF OTHERS. THEY
ONLY RESPOND TO ONE
THING... POWER.



I SHOULD
KNOW.

I'VE BEEN
DEALING WITH
IT MY WHOLE
LIFE.

DO YOU WANT TO TELL ME WHAT YOU WERE THINKING? DO YOU KNOW HOW IT MADE ME LOOK?? TO HAVE MY OWN SON TAKING PART IN CANNON'S UNSANCTIONED MISSION.

I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE PEOPLE IN SABA WHO WERE DYING, NOT HOW MY ACTIONS MIGHT IMPACT YOUR STATUS ON THE POLITICAL FOOD CHAIN.

THAT STATUS YOU MOCK IS THE ONLY THING THAT KEPT YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS OUT OF TROUBLE.

I SUPPOSE I WOULD THANK YOU IF I THOUGHT YOU TRULY DID IT FOR ME. BUT YOU PROBABLY FIGURED IT WOULD BE EVEN MORE EMBARRASSING TO HAVE A SON LOCKED UP.

HOW COULD YOU IGNORE THEIR CALL FOR HELP? THE BUILDINGS WERE CRUMBLING BEFORE MY VERY EYES. AND THE BODIES... HUNDREDS OF THEM FLOATING LIFELESSLY AMONG THE DEBRIS LIKE BROKEN BITS OF CORRAL.

WHEN YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR AN ENTIRE WORLD, SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE LARGER IMPLICATIONS OF YOUR DECISIONS.

SABA IS JUST ONE SMALL SETTLEMENT. MURIA ALONE HAS TEN TIMES ITS CITIZENS. THAT'S WHAT THALASSAR FAILS TO REALIZE... THE CONCEPT OF THE GREATER GOOD.

NO, FATHER. IT'S YOU WHO DOES NOT REALIZE... TODAY THE COUNCIL STOOD BY AND DID NOTHING WHILE ITS OWN PEOPLE WERE SLAUGHTERED. YOU THINK THALASSAR IS STANDING ALONE? HE'S NOT. I AM RIGHT THERE WITH HIM.

AND ONCE WORD SPREADS OF JUST WHAT HAPPENED IN SABA, THALASSAR WILL HAVE ALL THE SUPPORT HE NEEDS.

AND BY THE WAY...

...I'M FINE.



THE POWER OF
THE BLACK CANNOT
BE IGNORED. NOW WITH
YOUR RETURN, WE WILL
MOVE FORWARD...

...TOGETHER.

DON'T
TOUCH ME!

I'VE HEARD THIS
ALL BEFORE, KILLIAN
ONCE SPOKE AS YOU DO. HE
TOLD ME ABOUT THE
DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR OF THE
HUMANS. HE ALSO SOUGHT TO
TEACH THEM A LESSON AND
STATED THE IMPORTANCE OF
MY ROLE IN HIS CAUSE.

YOU SAY YOU
ARE MY FATHER, BUT
ALL YOU WANT OUT OF ME
IS TO FIGHT YOUR WAR
FOR YOU. I MAY NOT
KNOW MUCH, BUT THAT
DOESN'T SOUND VERY
FATHERLY TO ME.

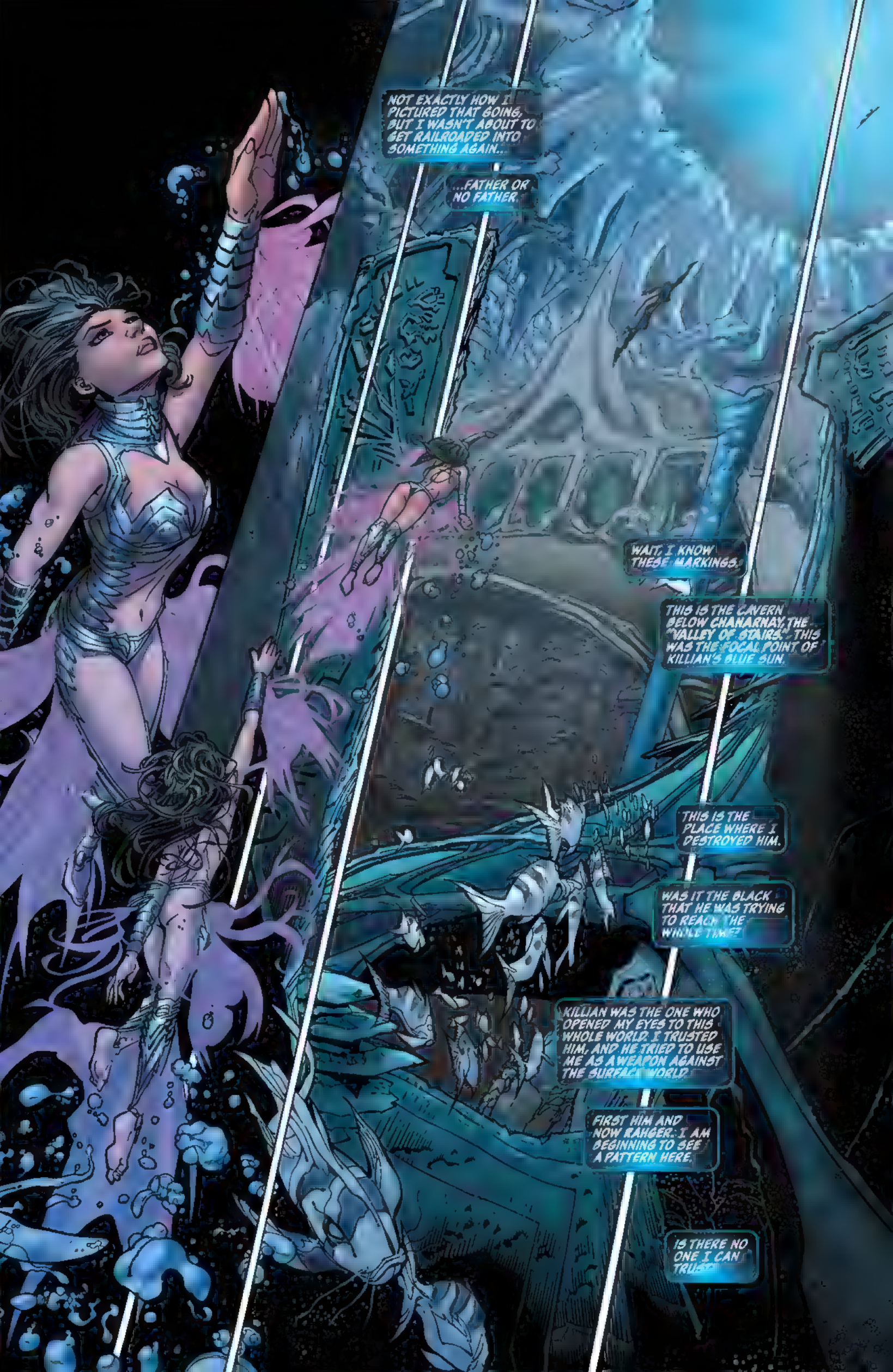
YOU FORGET
YOUR PLACE,
ASPEN. AS A
DAUGHTER, YOU
ARE TO OBEY
MY WISHES.

NOW THAT
JUST GOES TO
SHOW HOW LITTLE
YOU KNOW OF
ME.

A FATHER
WHO DID MORE
THAN JUST GIVE
BIRTH TO ME WOULD
KNOW HOW I THRIVE
ON CHALLENGING
AUTHORITY.

I AM THROUGH
WITH PEOPLE
DICTATING TO ME A
SENSE OF DUTY, AND I
DON'T SEE ANY REASON
TO CARRY ON THIS
LITTLE REUNION ANY
LONGER.

GOODBYE...
FATHER.



NOT EXACTLY HOW I
PICTURED THAT GOING,
BUT I WASN'T ABOUT TO
GET RAILROADED INTO
SOMETHING AGAIN...

...FATHER OR
NO FATHER.

WAIT, I KNOW
THESE MARKINGS.

THIS IS THE CAVERN
BELOW CHANARNAY, THE
"VALLEY OF STAIRS." THIS
WAS THE FOCAL POINT OF
KILLIAN'S BLUE SUN.

THIS IS THE
PLACE WHERE I
DESTROYED HIM.

WAS IT THE BLACK
THAT HE WAS TRYING
TO REACH THE
WHILE TIME?

KILLIAN WAS THE ONE WHO
OPENED MY EYES TO THIS
WHOLE WORLD. I TRUSTED
HIM, AND HE TRIED TO USE
ME AS A WEAPON AGAINST
THE SURFACE WORLD.

FIRST HIM AND
NOW RANGER. I AM
BEGINNING TO SEE
A PATTERN HERE.

IS THERE NO
ONE I CAN
TRUST?



UNFORTUNATE
TO HAVE GONE TO
ALL THAT TROUBLE IN
OBTAINING ASPEN, ONLY
TO HAVE HER REJECT
HER RESPONSIBILITY.

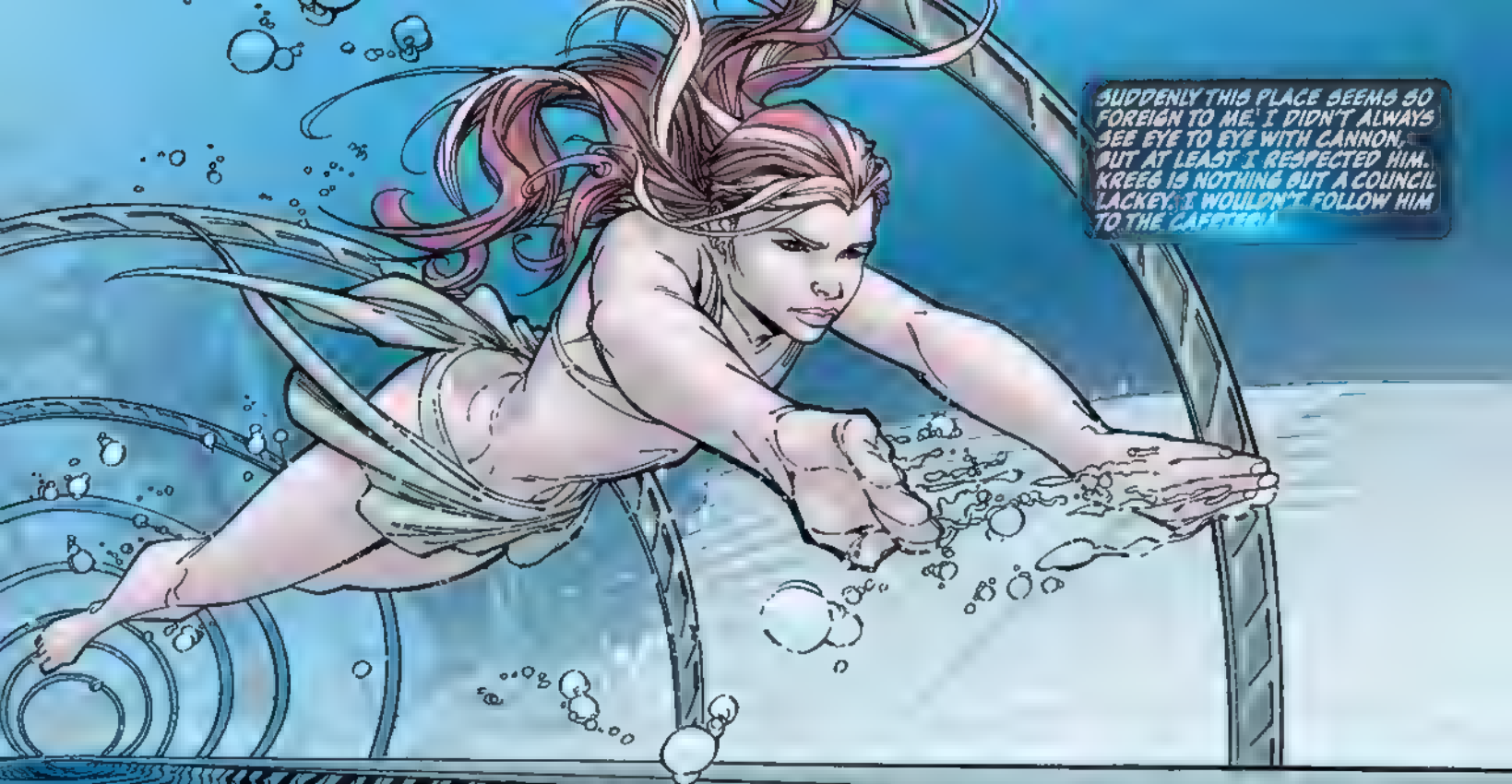
PERHAPS SHE
IS SIMPLY NOT
READY TO JOIN
US.

THE WORLD DOES
NOT STOP TO GIVE ONE
TIME TO PREPARE FOR THEIR
CHALLENGES. ONE MUST RISE
TO THE TASK WHEN CALLED
UPON. THAT IS THE TRUE SIGN
OF ONE'S CHARACTER.

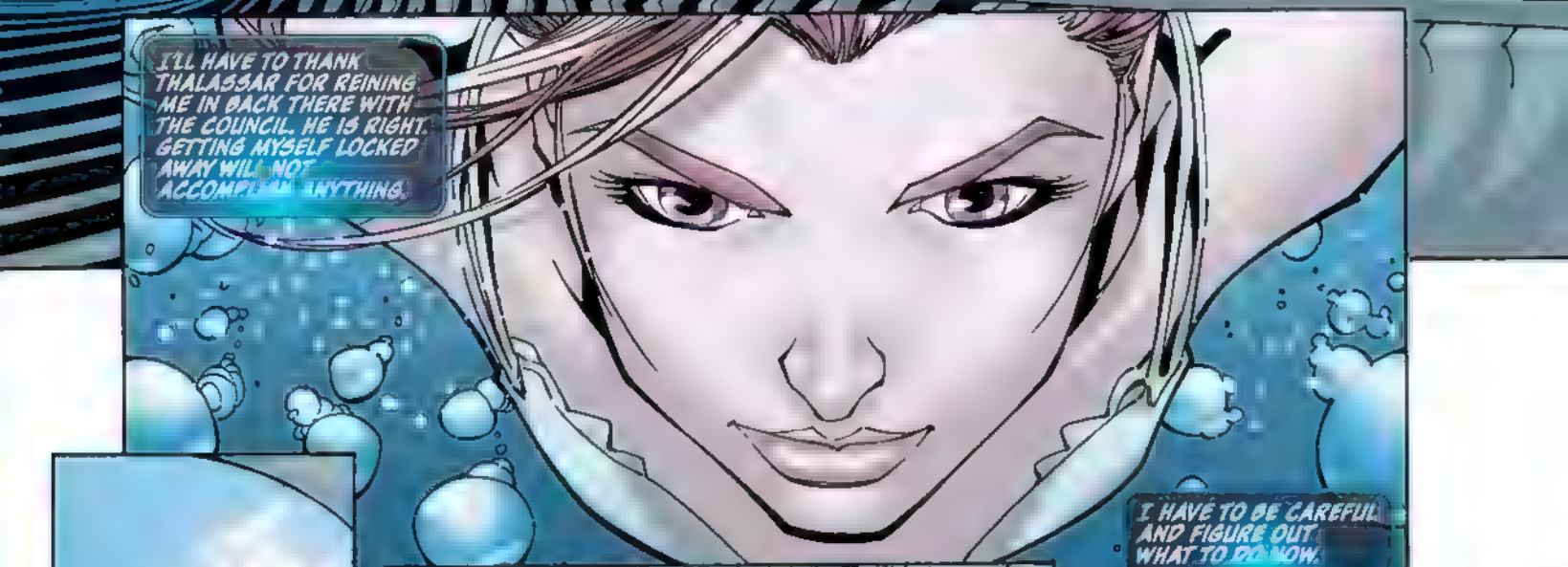
WHAT
NOW?

EVENTUALLY,
ASPEN WILL HAVE
TO BE DEALT WITH,
BUT FOR NOW WE
SHALL PRESS ON.

THERE IS MUCH
TO BE DONE TO
PREPARE FOR THE
COMING STORM.

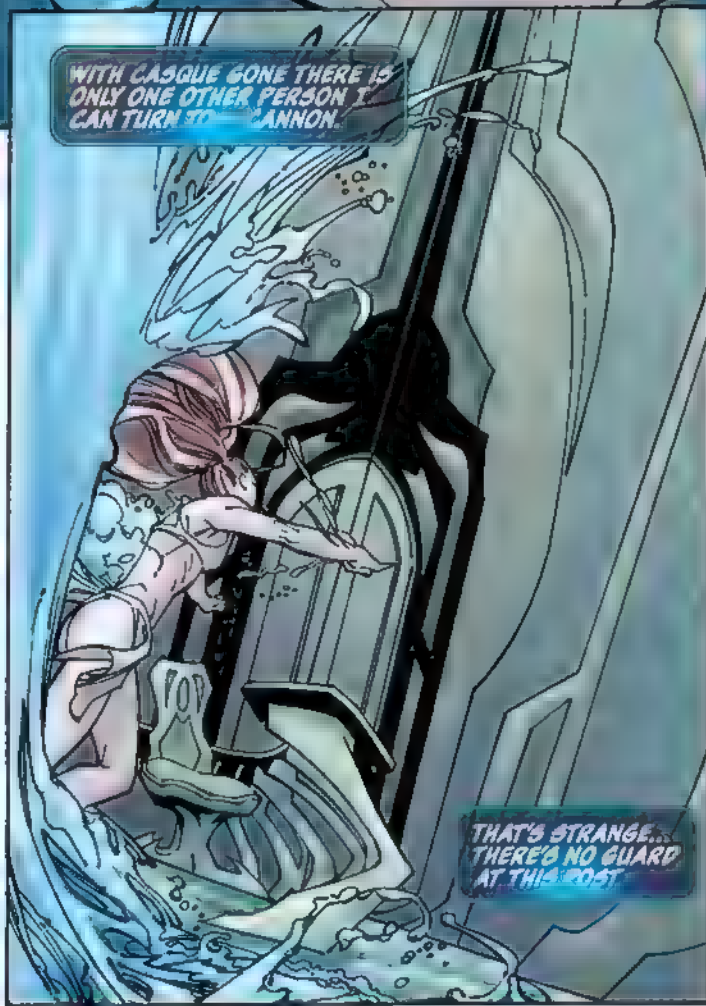
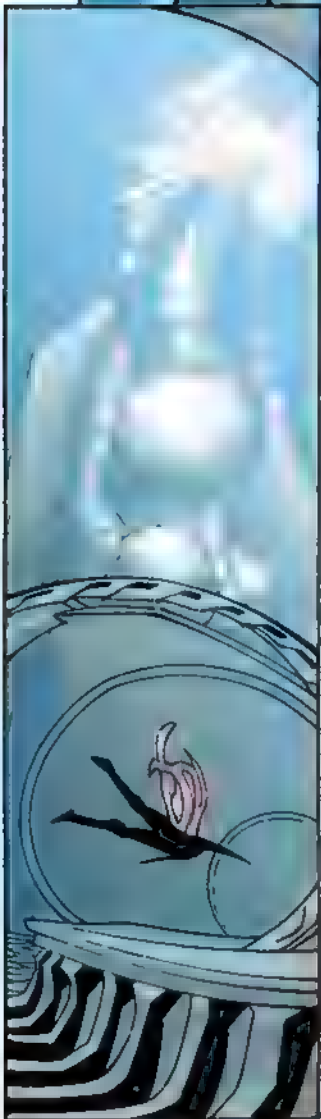


SUDDENLY THIS PLACE SEEMS SO FOREIGN TO ME. I DIDN'T ALWAYS SEE EYE TO EYE WITH CANNON, BUT AT LEAST I RESPECTED HIM. KREEG IS NOTHING BUT A COUNCIL LACKEY. I WOULDN'T FOLLOW HIM TO THE CAFETERIA.



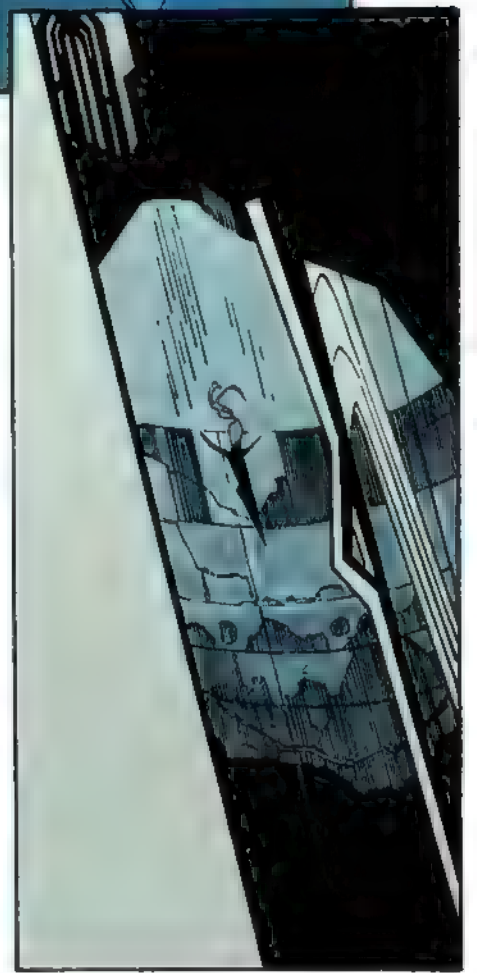
I'LL HAVE TO THANK THALASSAR FOR REINING ME IN BACK THERE WITH THE COUNCIL. HE IS RIGHT. GETTING MYSELF LOCKED AWAY WILL NOT ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.

I HAVE TO BE CAREFUL AND FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO NOW.



WITH CASQUE GONE THERE IS ONLY ONE OTHER PERSON I CAN TURN TO—CANNON.

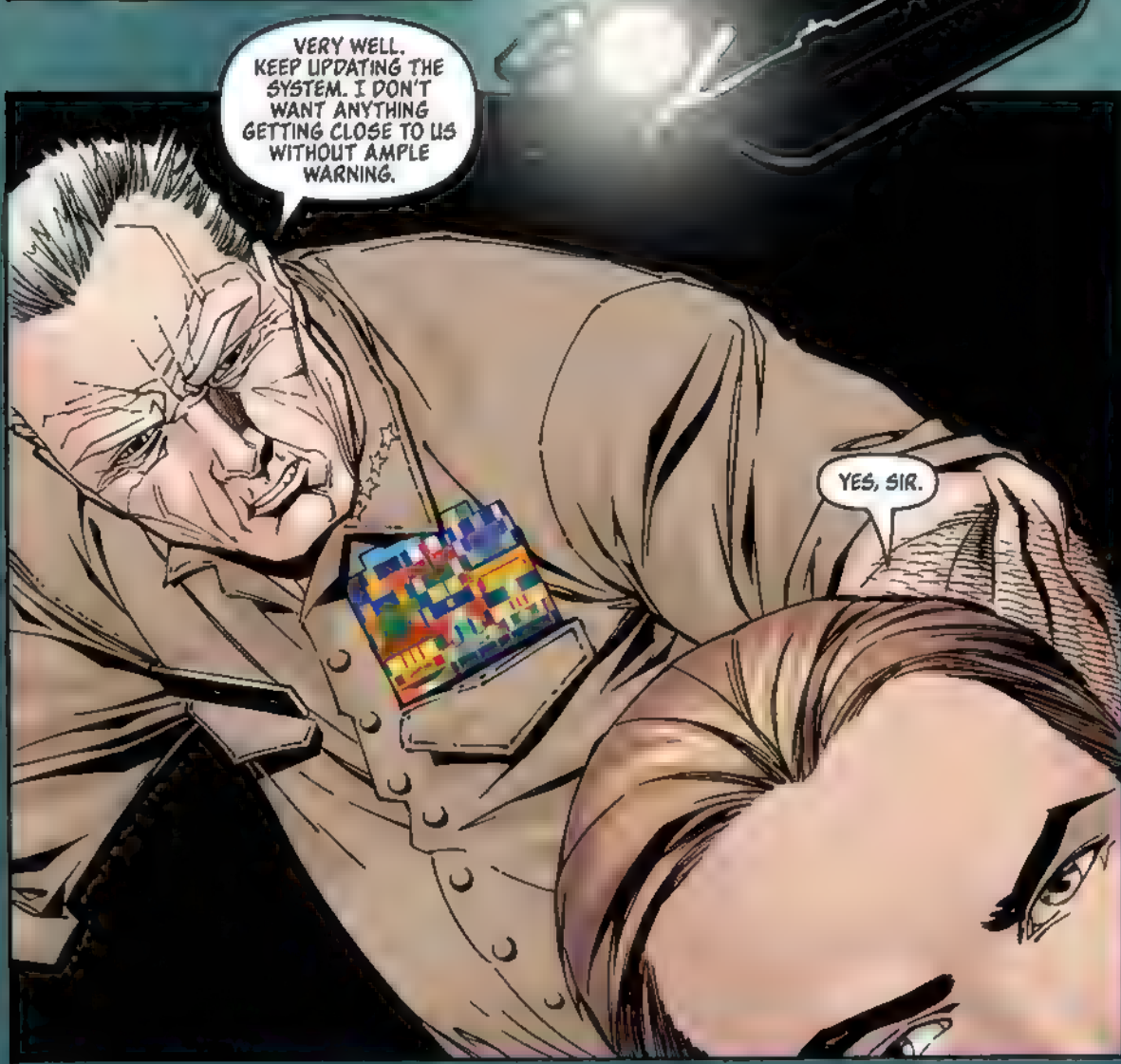
THAT'S STRANGE... THERE'S NO GUARD AT THIS POST.





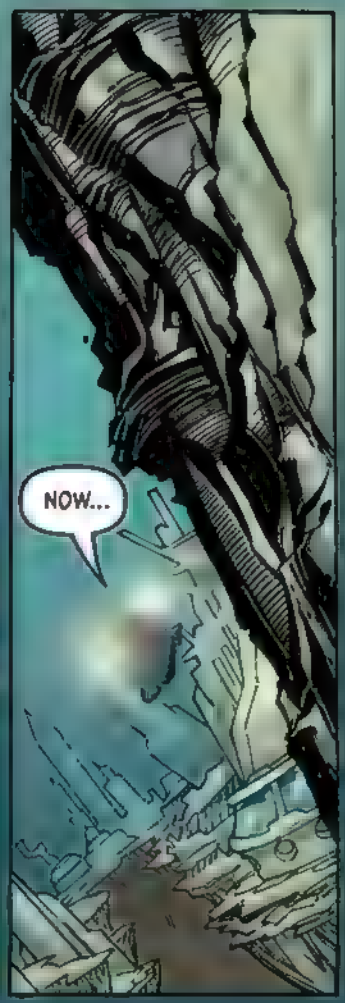


INITIAL
ESTIMATES PUT OUR
CASUALTIES AT LESS
THAN TEN PERCENT, WHICH
IS MORE THAN ACCEPTABLE.
SATELLITE AND SONAR
INDICATE ZERO ACTIVITY
WITHIN A FIFTY-MILE
PERIMETER.

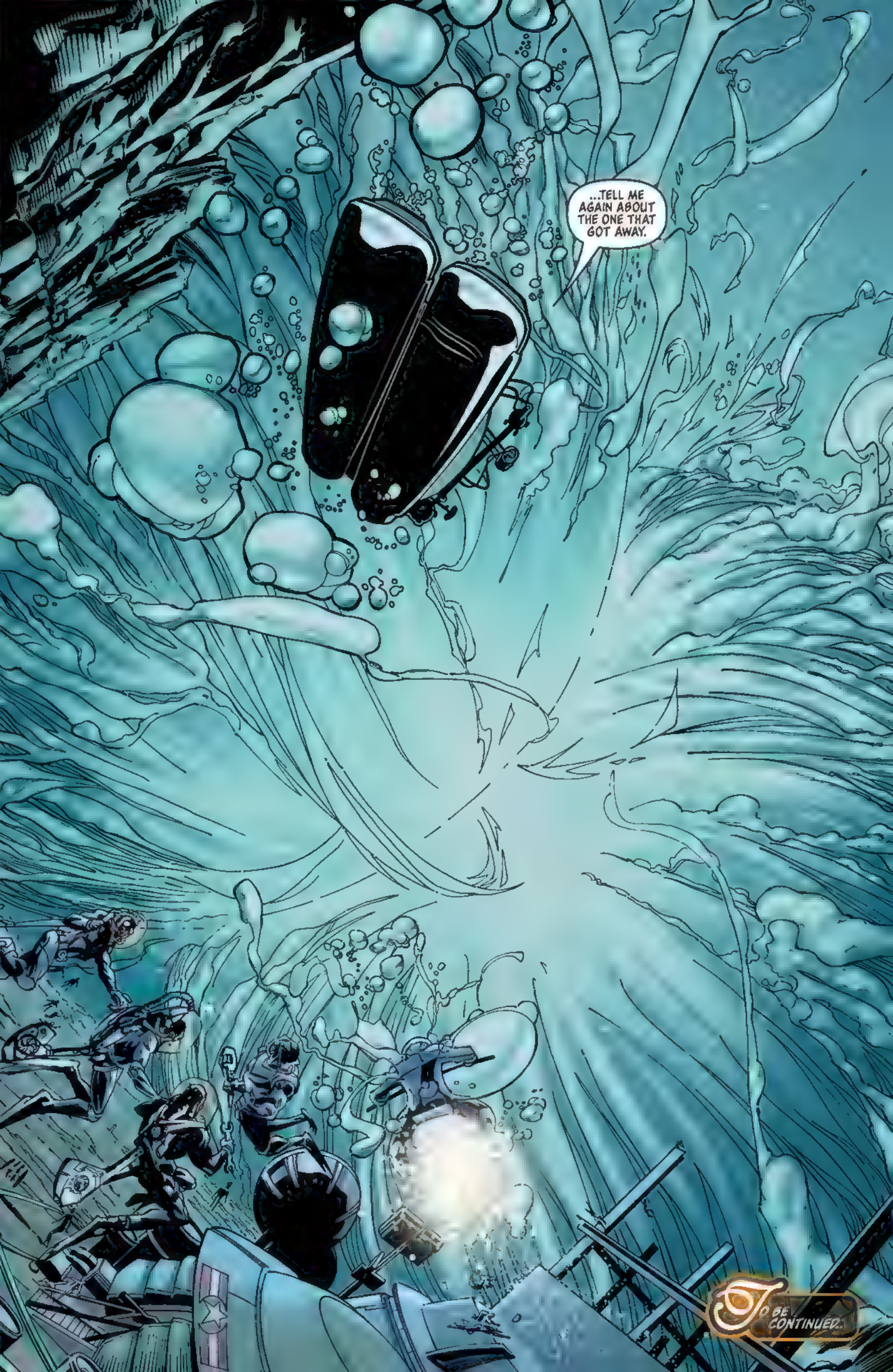


VERY WELL.
KEEP UPDATING THE
SYSTEM. I DON'T
WANT ANYTHING
GETTING CLOSE TO US
WITHOUT AMPLE
WARNING.

YES, SIR.



NOW...



...TELL ME
AGAIN ABOUT
THE ONE THAT
GOT AWAY.

ASPEN
Vol. 2

#4
OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM™

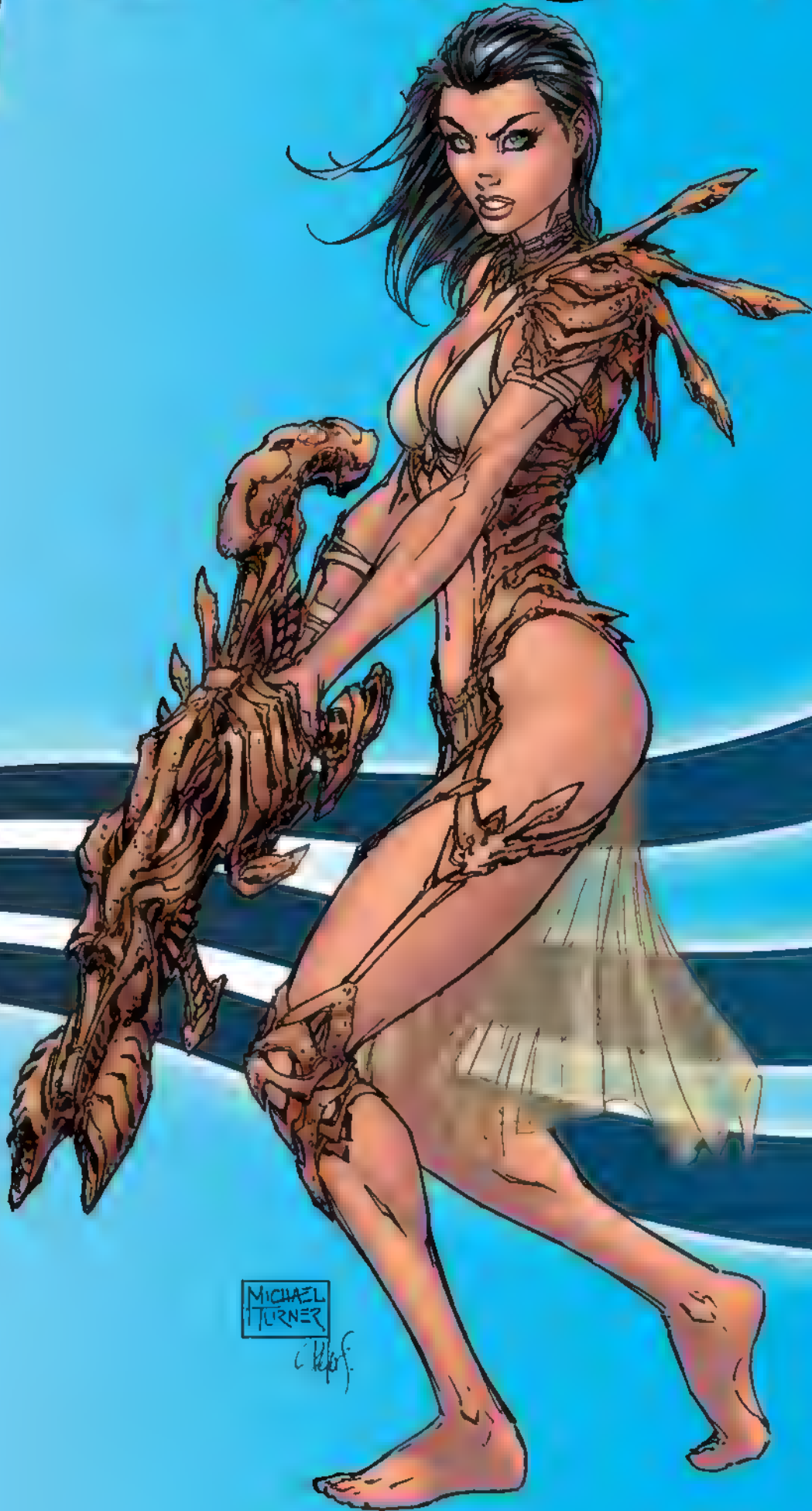


MICHAEL
TURNER

ASPEN
Vol. 2

#4
OF 11
COVER B

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



ASPEN
Vol. 2

#4
OF 11
COVER C

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



MICHAEL
TURNER
c. 1995



VOL. 2

#4

OF 11
COVER D

MICHAEL
TURNER

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM

VOLUME TWO
Issue Four of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
story

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MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM™ Vol. 2 Issue #4

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SO, BABY,
YOU ENJOYING
YOURSELF OR
WHAT?

HELL, YEAH. THIS
PLACE IS AWESOME.
THE BEACH... THE
SPA... THE ROOM
SERVICE...

...BUT
WHAT'S THE
SPECIAL OCCASION?
I MEAN, WE HAVEN'T
BEEN DATING FOR A
YEAR...

I BEEN
THINKING. WE GOT
A GOOD THING GOING
HERE AND... WELL, UM...
OH, YOU KNOW YOU'RE
FINE.

YEAH...
AAAAANNND?

AND, I'VE BEEN
THINKING ABOUT
WHAT'S NEXT. I MEAN,
I THINK I'M READY
FOR... HUH?

WHOA...

HONEY?

READY FOR
WHAT?



IT SEEMS LIKE I'VE BEEN UNDERWATER FOR YEARS. BEING KIDNAPPED BY AN ANCIENT RACE OF BEINGS CALLED THE BLACK AND GETTING DRAGGED TO THE ABSOLUTE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD CAN TEND TO HAVE THAT EFFECT ON YOU. HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S ONLY BEEN A FEW MONTHS. I MISSED THIS PLACE... THE HEAT FROM THE SUN... THE WIND ON MY FACE... THE BIRDS IN THE AIR.

I CAN'T BELIEVE RANGER THOUGHT I WOULD HELP HIM DESTROY THIS WORLD. I GUESS I SHOULD REFER TO HIM AS MY FATHER, BUT IT JUST DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.

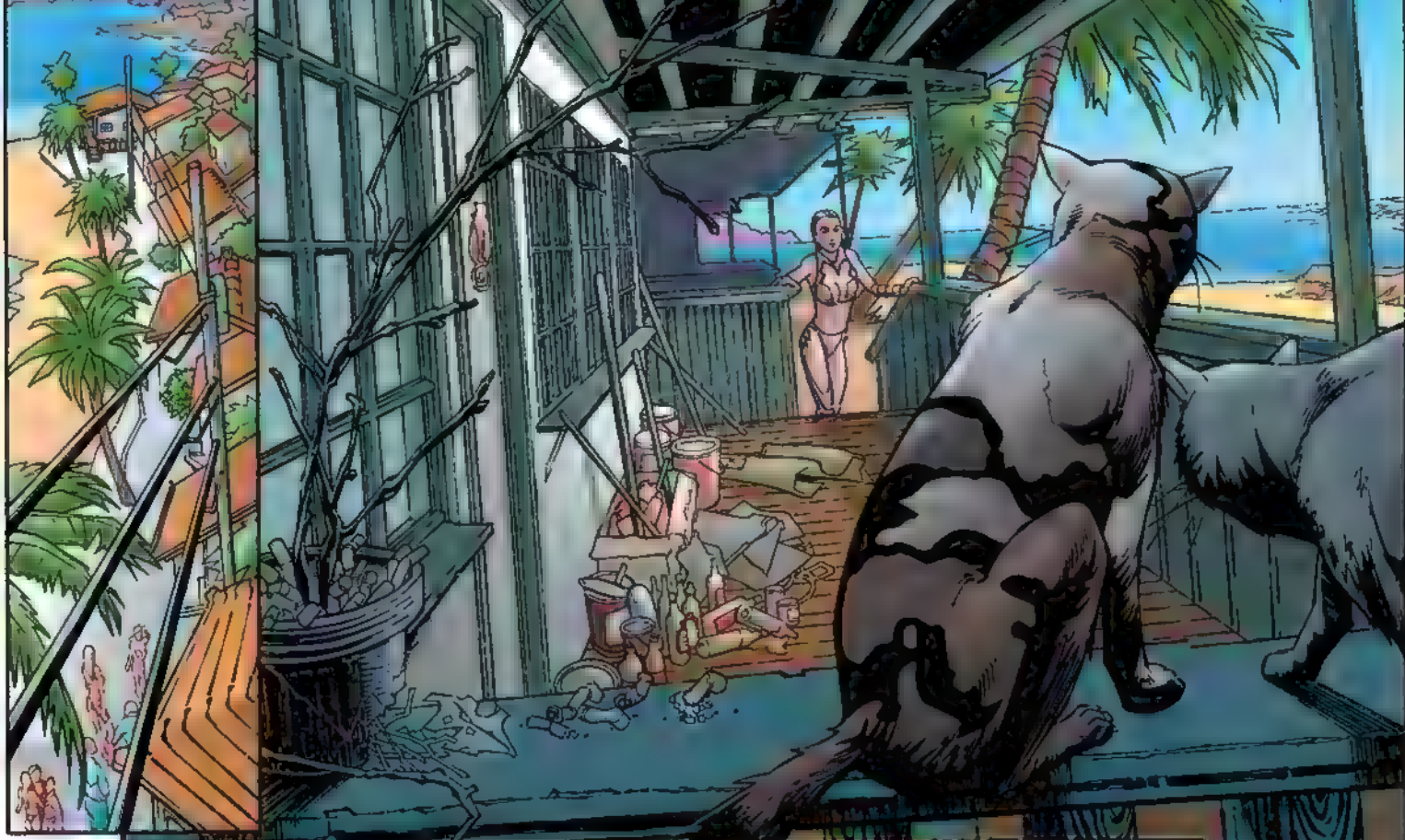
READY FOR WHAT? TAZ!

UM... NEVERMIND, BABY.

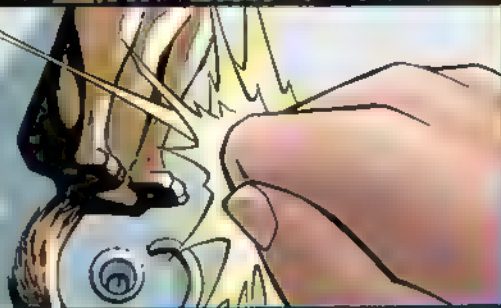
DAMN... NOW SHE'S FINE.

AND NO MATTER WHERE I MAY HAVE ACTUALLY COME FROM, THIS IS STILL MY HOME.

SPEAKING OF WHICH, I'VE NEVER WANTED TO CRASH ON MY SOFA SO MUCH IN ALL MY LIFE. A SHOWER AND A CHANGE OF CLOTHES WOULD BE NICE TOO. I SMELL LIKE WET CARPET.



I HOPE TYLER ISN'T FISSSED ABOUT ME SAILING ON MY SHARE OF THE RENT LATELY. I WONDER WHAT STORY I COULD GIVE HER THAT SHE WOULD ACTUALLY BUY. REPORTERS HAVE A WAY OF SENSING A STORY WHEN THEY HEAR IT.



-COUGH-
-COUGH-

YEAH?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I'M ASPEN. I LIVE HERE WITH TYLER KINCAID... AT LEAST I THOUGHT I DID.

YOU THE WATER GIRL?

EXCUSE ME?

YOU SWIM WITH THE DOLPHINS AT SEAWORLD OR SOMETHING?

I'M A MARINE BIOLOGIST.





WHATEVER...
TYLER GOT AN
ASSIGNMENT OVERSEAS.
THE LANDLORD IS LETTING ME
SUBLET FOR THE NEXT SIX
MONTHS. HE SAID YOU MIGHT
SHOW UP. SAID YOU WERE LIKE
TYLER, BUT A BRUNETTE AND
THINNER. DIDN'T THINK
THAT WAS POSSIBLE.

WHERE'S
MATIL... WHERE'S
THE DOG?

I DON'T
KNOW. TOOK IT
WITH HER I
GUESS.

I GOT SOME
WHISKEY HERE, IF
YOU CAN FIND
ANOTHER GLASS.

THANKS,
BUT I THINK
I'LL JUST GO TO
MY ROOM.

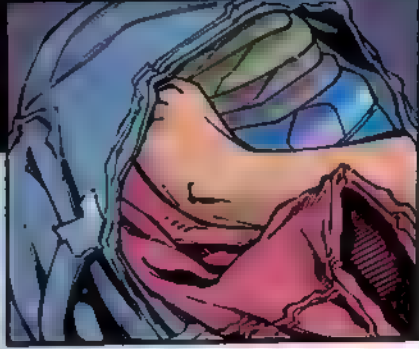
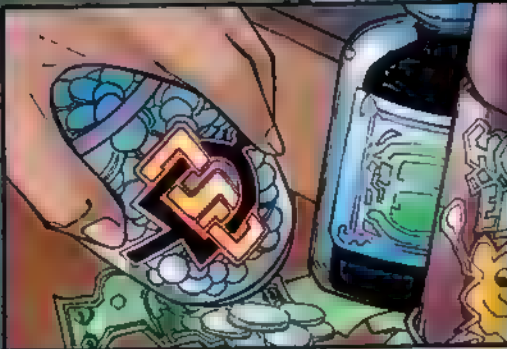
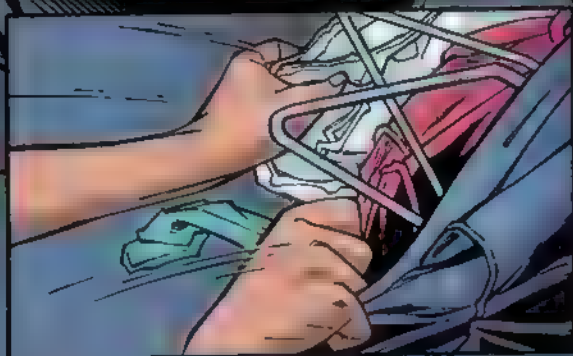
PASSIONS
IS ON IN FIVE
MINUTES!



THIS IS JUST GREAT.
SOMEONE IS
LITERALLY CRAPPING
ALL OVER MY LIFE.

I WOULD
SLEEP
HERE

BRUZ

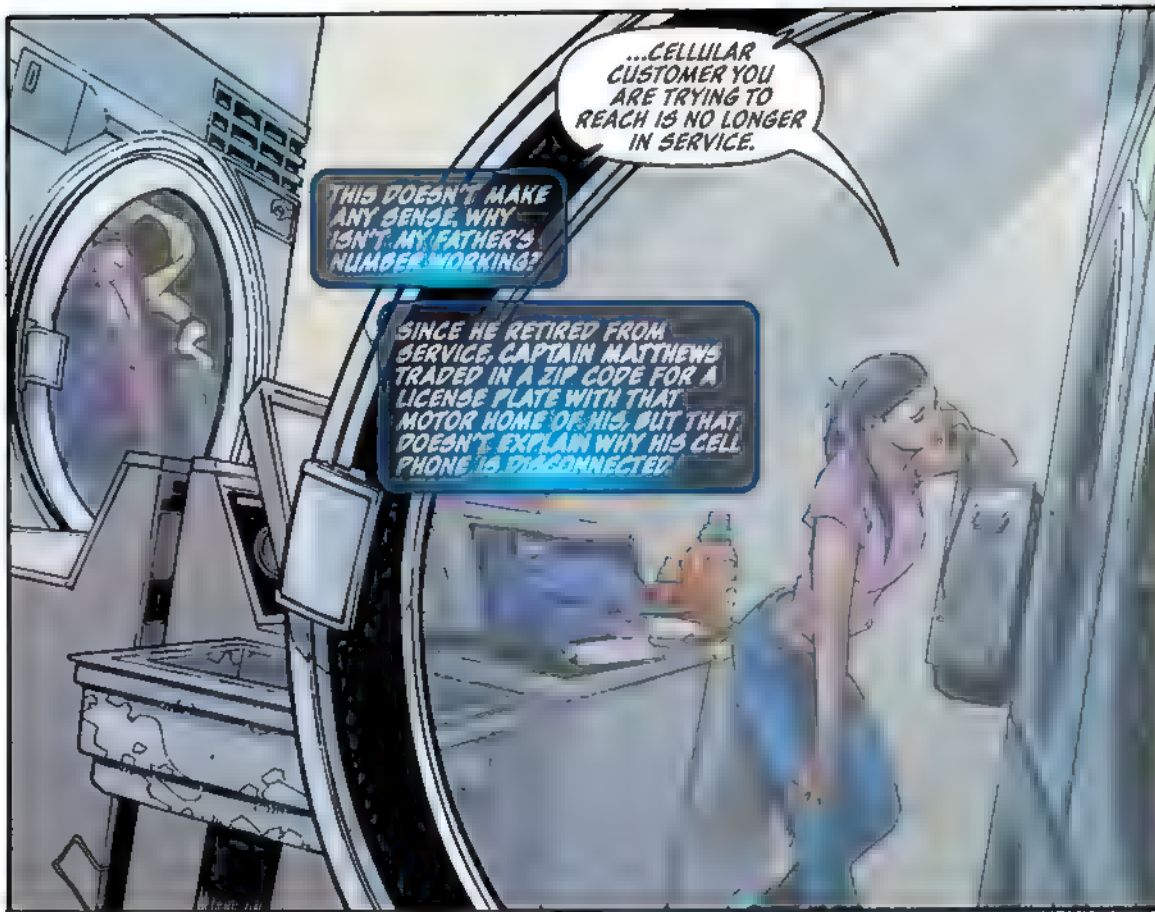


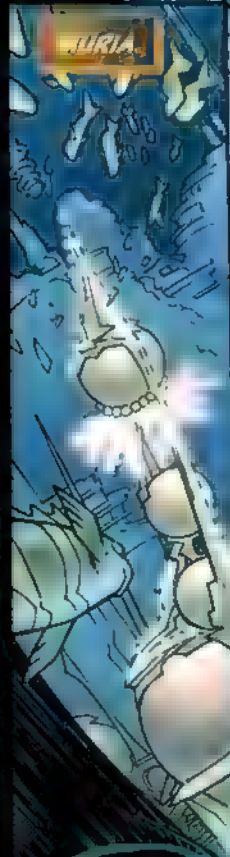
DID TYLER
LEAVE A NUMBER
WHERE SHE CAN BE
REACHED?

I THINK SHE LEFT
A NUMBER FOR THE
NETWORK'S EUROPEAN
OFFICE. IT'S AROUND HERE
SOMEWHERE. I'LL LOOK
FOR IT DURING A
COMMERCIAL.

HOME SWEET
HOME, YEAH RIGHT.







WE MAY NOT
HAVE ALL THE
FACTS YET...

...BUT WE DO
KNOW THAT CANNON
HAS ESCAPED AND TWO
OF OUR SOLDIERS ARE
IN THE INFIRMARY.

WE'RE ALL AWARE
OF WHAT CANNON HAS
MEANT TO US. HE BASICALLY
IS THE SECURITY FORCE. BUT
OUR FEELINGS FOR HIM CANNOT
AFFECT OUR DUTY. CANNON IS
A FUGITIVE NOW AND MUST
BE DEALT WITH
ACCORDINGLY.

AN INITIAL SEARCH
THROUGH THE CITY HAS
COME UP EMPTY, BUT THAT
DOESN'T MEAN HE ISN'T STILL
HERE. WE NEED TO FIND THE
PEOPLE HE TRUSTS AND
DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT
HE'S TRIED TO MAKE
CONTACT WITH ANY
OF THEM.

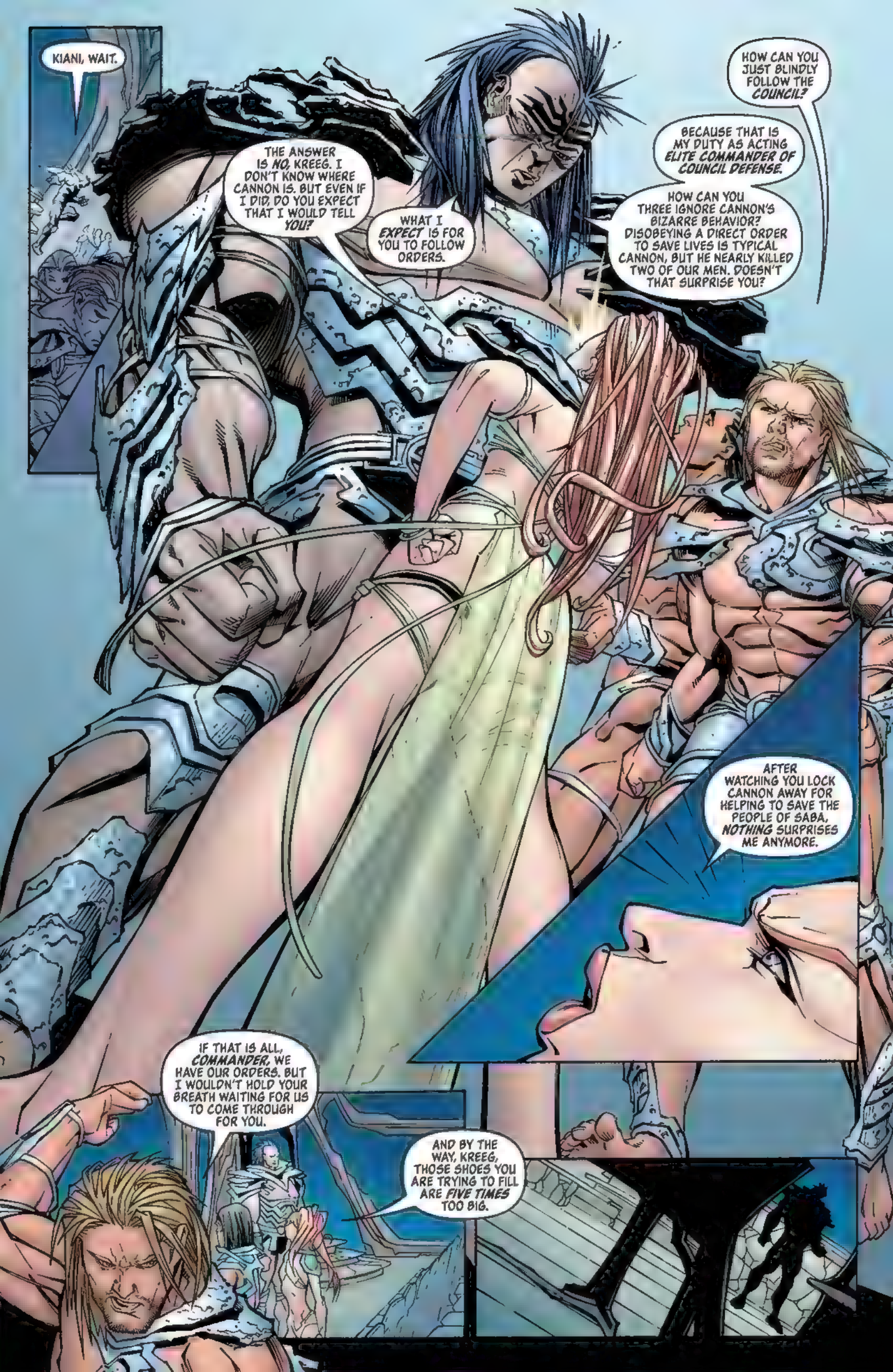
DO YOU GET
THE SENSE HE'S
TALKING TO US?

LIKE I CARE.

WE DON'T
KNOW WHERE
HE IS.

DO WE?





KIANI, WAIT.

THE ANSWER IS NO, KREEG. I DON'T KNOW WHERE CANNON IS. BUT EVEN IF I DID, DO YOU EXPECT THAT I WOULD TELL YOU?

WHAT I EXPECT IS FOR YOU TO FOLLOW ORDERS.

HOW CAN YOU JUST BLINDLY FOLLOW THE COUNCIL?

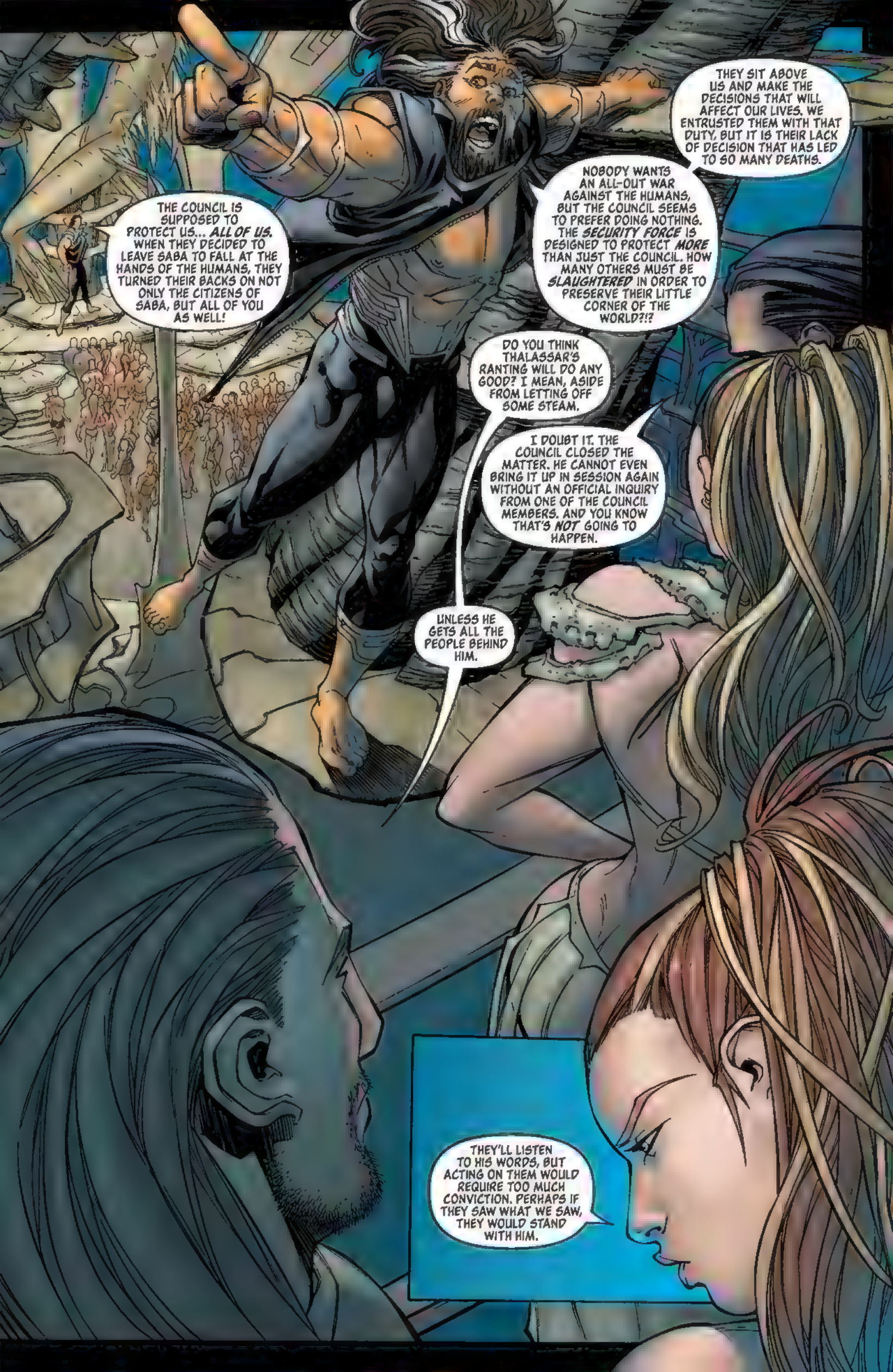
BECAUSE THAT IS MY DUTY AS ACTING ELITE COMMANDER OF COUNCIL DEFENSE.

HOW CAN YOU THREE IGNORE CANNON'S BIZARRE BEHAVIOR? DISOBEYING A DIRECT ORDER TO SAVE LIVES IS TYPICAL CANNON, BUT HE NEARLY KILLED TWO OF OUR MEN. DOESN'T THAT SURPRISE YOU?

AFTER WATCHING YOU LOCK CANNON AWAY FOR HELPING TO SAVE THE PEOPLE OF SABA, NOTHING SURPRISES ME ANYMORE.

IF THAT IS ALL, COMMANDER, WE HAVE OUR ORDERS. BUT I WOULDN'T HOLD YOUR BREATH WAITING FOR US TO COME THROUGH FOR YOU.

AND BY THE WAY, KREEG, THOSE SHOES YOU ARE TRYING TO FILL ARE FIVE TIMES TOO BIG.



THE COUNCIL IS SUPPOSED TO PROTECT US... **ALL OF US**. WHEN THEY DECIDED TO LEAVE SABA TO FALL AT THE HANDS OF THE HUMANS, THEY TURNED THEIR BACKS ON NOT ONLY THE CITIZENS OF SABA, BUT ALL OF YOU AS WELL!

THEY SIT ABOVE US AND MAKE THE DECISIONS THAT WILL AFFECT OUR LIVES. WE ENTRUSTED THEM WITH THAT DUTY, BUT IT IS THEIR LACK OF DECISION THAT HAS LED TO SO MANY DEATHS.

NOBODY WANTS AN ALL-OUT WAR AGAINST THE HUMANS, BUT THE COUNCIL SEEMS TO PREFER DOING NOTHING. THE **SECURITY FORCE** IS DESIGNED TO PROTECT **MORE** THAN JUST THE COUNCIL. HOW MANY OTHERS MUST BE **SLAUGHTERED** IN ORDER TO PRESERVE THEIR LITTLE CORNER OF THE WORLD?!!

DO YOU THINK THALASSAR'S RANTING WILL DO ANY GOOD? I MEAN, ASIDE FROM LETTING OFF SOME STEAM.

I DOUBT IT. THE COUNCIL CLOSED THE MATTER. HE CANNOT EVEN BRING IT UP IN SESSION AGAIN WITHOUT AN OFFICIAL INQUIRY FROM ONE OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS. AND YOU KNOW THAT'S **NOT** GOING TO HAPPEN.

UNLESS HE GETS ALL THE PEOPLE BEHIND HIM.

THEY'LL LISTEN TO HIS WORDS, BUT ACTING ON THEM WOULD REQUIRE TOO MUCH CONVICTION. PERHAPS IF THEY SAW WHAT WE SAW, THEY WOULD STAND WITH HIM.



THERE! ONE OF OUR ILLUSTRIOUS COUNCIL MEMBERS COMES NOW.

TELL ME, KINZIN... WILL THE PAINS OF WAR HAVE TO STRIKE AT THE COUNCIL DIRECTLY BEFORE YOU FULFILL YOUR DUTY IN DEFENDING OUR PEOPLE?

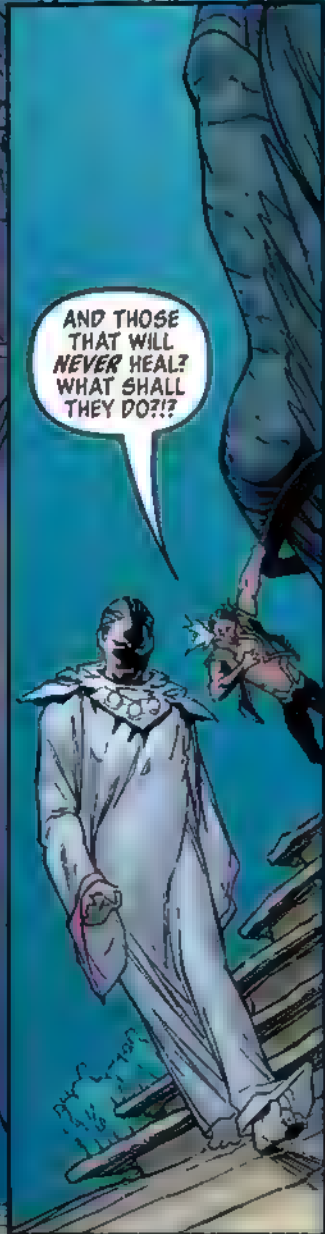


THALASSAR, I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR NEED TO LAY THE BLAME WITH US FOR THIS HORRIBLE EVENT. BUT SOMETIMES TRAGEDY IS JUST THAT... TRAGEDY.



AND WHEN YOU ARE GIVEN THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT SOMEONE, THEN DO NOTHING WHEN THEY ARE UNDER ATTACK, SOMETIMES THAT IS CALLED BETRAYAL... OR EVEN MURDER.

THE COUNCIL'S DECISION IS IN LINE WITH THE STANCE WE'VE TAKEN ALL ALONG REGARDING THE OUTER TERRITORIES. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO GAIN BY INCITING THE PEOPLE IN THIS DIFFICULT TIME? I WOULD HOPE THAT YOU WOULD REFRAIN FROM USING SUCH INFLAMMATORY WORDS AND SIMPLY ALLOW OUR COLLECTIVE HEALING TO BEGIN.



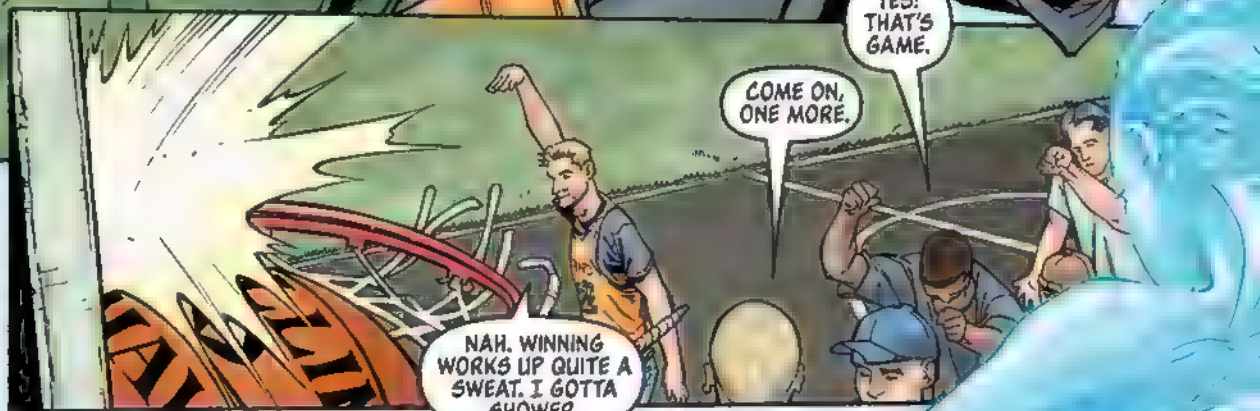
AND THOSE THAT WILL NEVER HEAL? WHAT SHALL THEY DO?!





GIVE IT UP,
CHANCE. UP IN
THE SKY YOU MAY BE
BETTER, BUT I OWN
THIS COURT. NO WAY
YOU'RE GETTING
BY ME.

YOU'RE
RIGHT... NO
GETTING BY YOU.
BUT **OVER** YOU IS
WHOLE 'NOTHER
STORY.



YES!
THAT'S
GAME.

COME ON,
ONE MORE.

NAH. WINNING
WORKS UP QUITE A
SWEAT. I GOTTA
SHOWER.

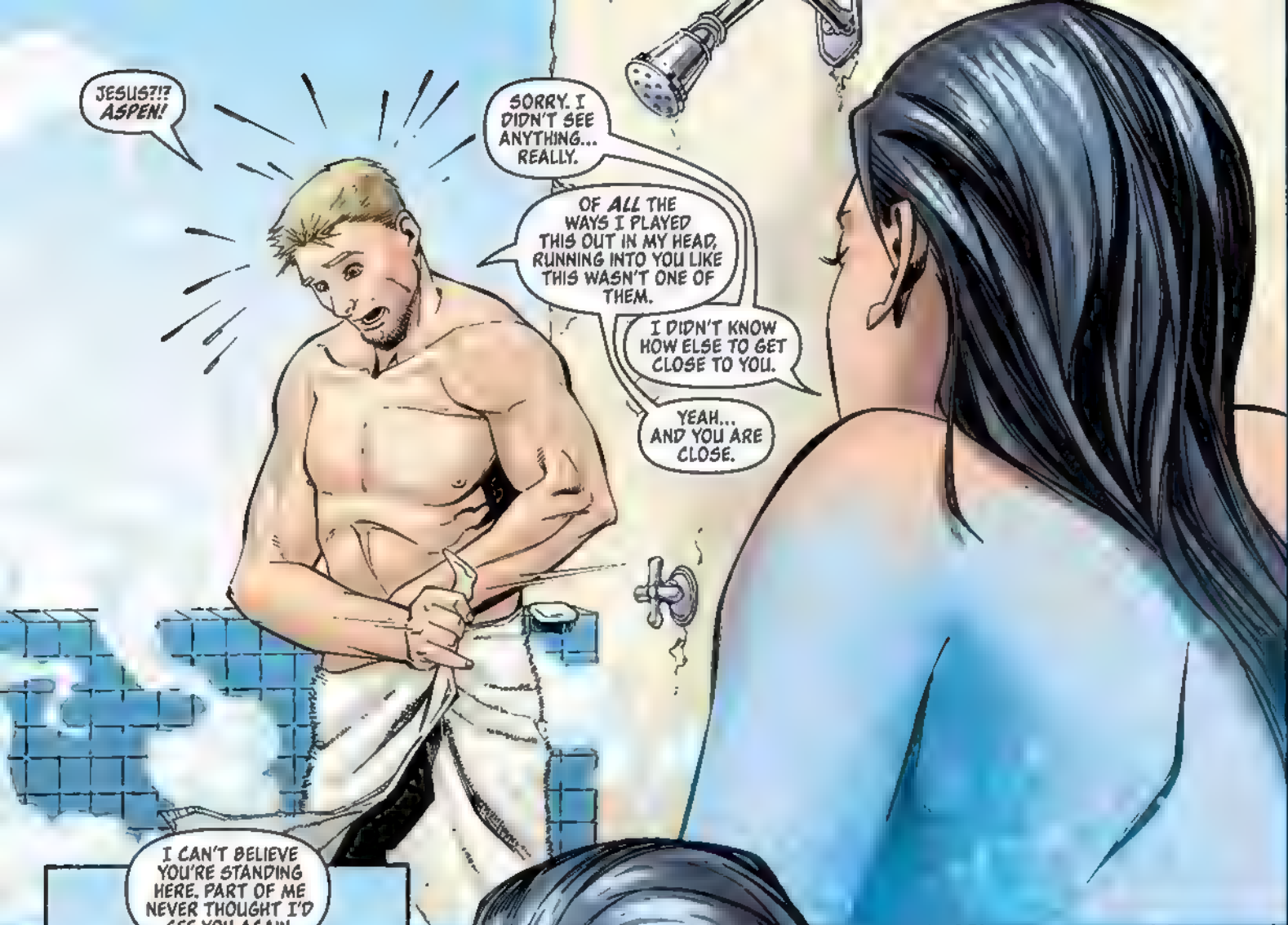
♪ "I GOT THE
SIZZLE BUT NOT
THE STEAK
I GOT THE BOAT BUT
NOT THE LAKE" ♪

♪ "I GOT THE
SHEETS BUT NOT
THE BED
I GOT THE JAM BUT
NOT THE BREAD" ♪

♪ "BUT HEY I'M
BIG IN JAPAN...
I'M BIG IN JAPAN...
I'M--" ♪



BIG IN
JAPAN?



JESUS?!?
ASPEN!

SORRY. I
DIDN'T SEE
ANYTHING...
REALLY.

OF ALL THE
WAYS I PLAYED
THIS OUT IN MY HEAD,
RUNNING INTO YOU LIKE
THIS WASN'T ONE OF
THEM.

I DIDN'T KNOW
HOW ELSE TO GET
CLOSE TO YOU.

YEAH...
AND YOU ARE
CLOSE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE
YOU'RE STANDING
HERE. PART OF ME
NEVER THOUGHT I'D
SEE YOU AGAIN.

WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

I'M SORRY, BUT
I DIDN'T KNOW WHO
ELSE TO CONTACT. I
NEED YOUR HELP,
CHANCE.

I NEED
TO FIND MY
FATHER.

I SUCK?!?
DUDE, I HAD
LIKE FOURTEEN
REBOUNDS.

IT HARDLY COUNTS
AS A REBOUND WHEN
THE BALL BOUNCES INTO
YOUR HANDS.



MAYBE WE
SHOULD CONTINUE
THIS REUNION
SOMEWHERE ELSE.

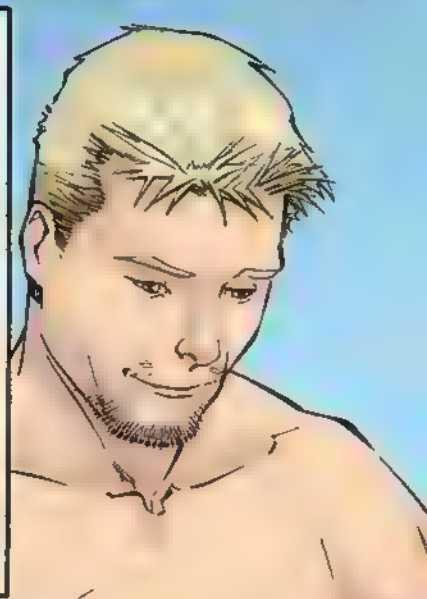
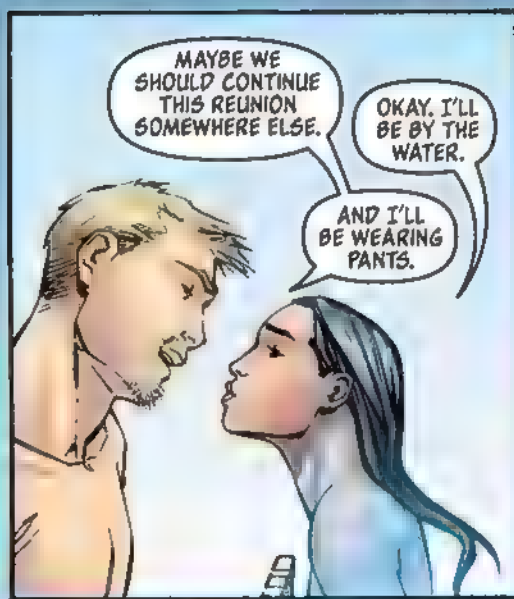
OKAY. I'LL
BE BY THE
WATER.

AND I'LL
BE WEARING
PANTS.

AND,
CHANCE...

YEAH?

IT'S GOOD
TO SEE YOU
TOO.



LATER

ARE YOU SURE YOUR FATHER JUST WASN'T OUT OF SIGNAL RANGE OR SOMETHING? SOME OF THOSE BACK ROADS CAN BE PRETTY REMOTE.

I'M SURE. THE PHONE HAD BEEN DISCONNECTED ALTOGETHER. SOMETHING IS WRONG.

I GOT A FRIEND IN PERSONNEL. MAYBE HE LEFT SOME CONTACT INFORMATION OR SOMETHING. GIVE ME A LITTLE TIME, AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN FIND.

TO BE HONEST, I'M JUST GLAD TO SEE THAT YOU'RE OKAY. ESPECIALLY WITH WHAT HAPPENED IN SABA.

WHAT'S SABA?

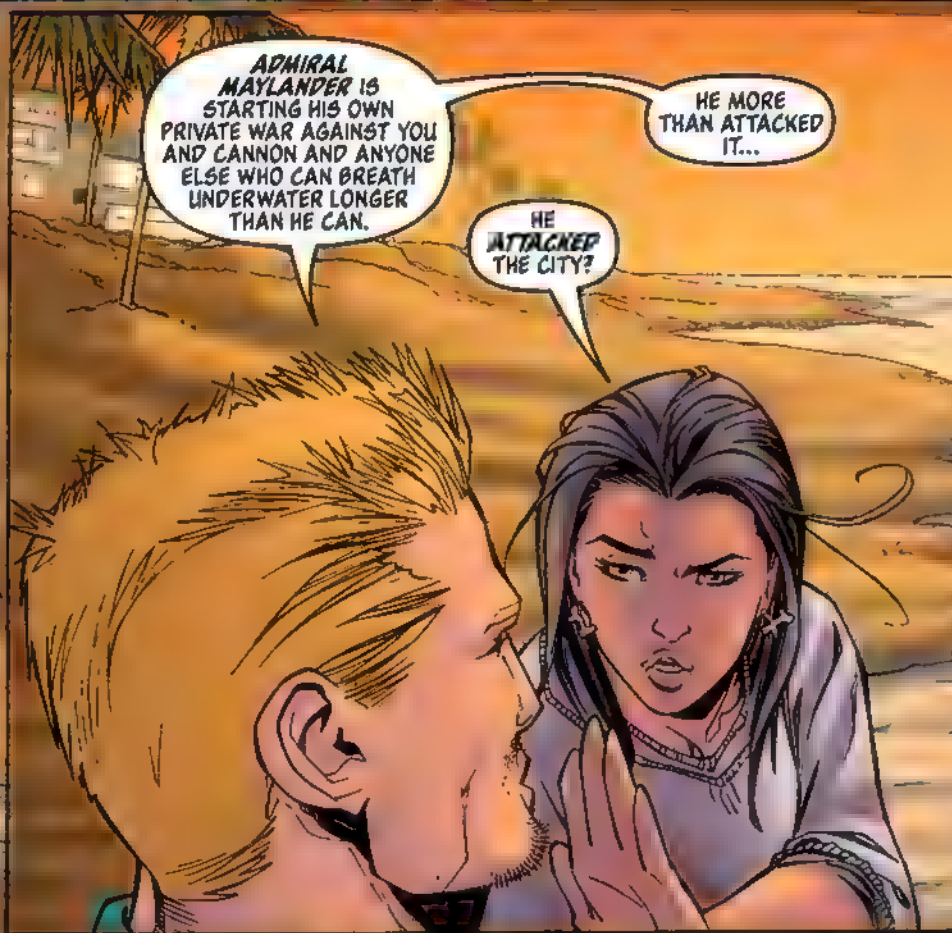
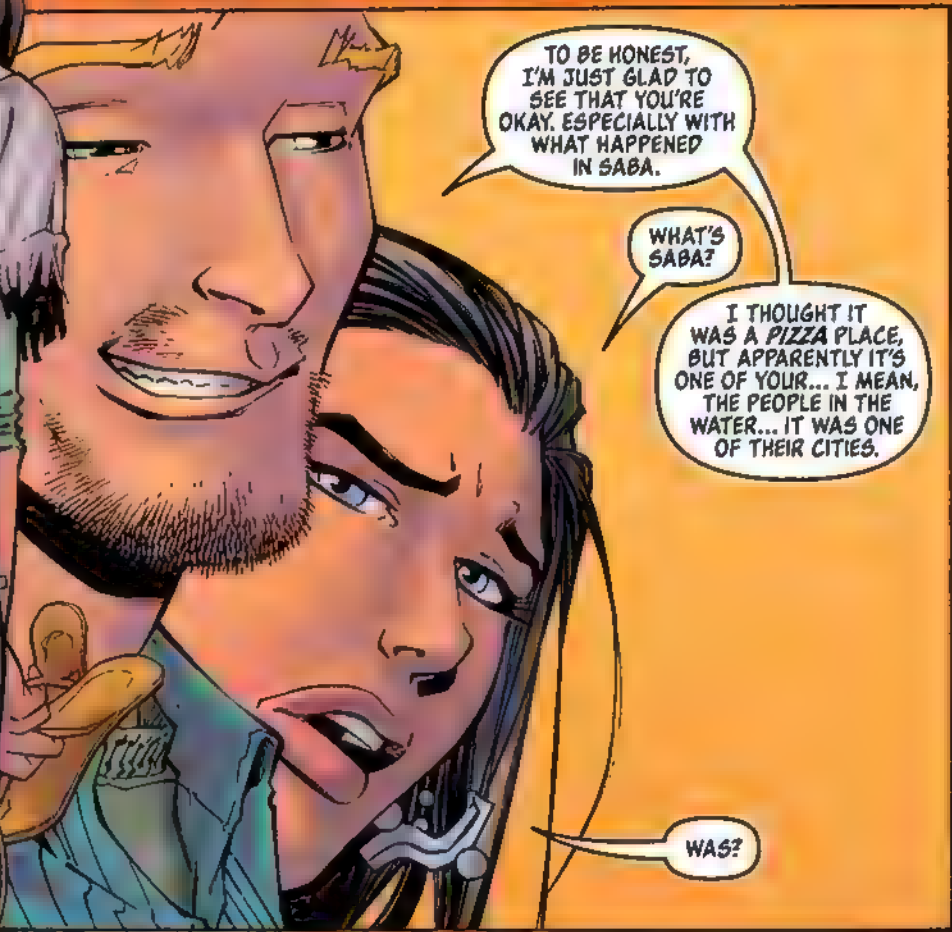
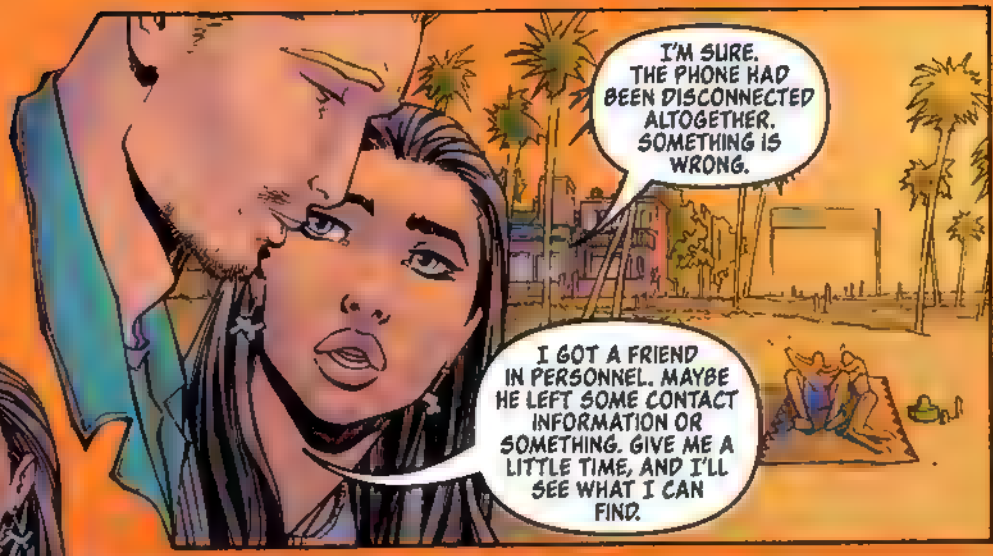
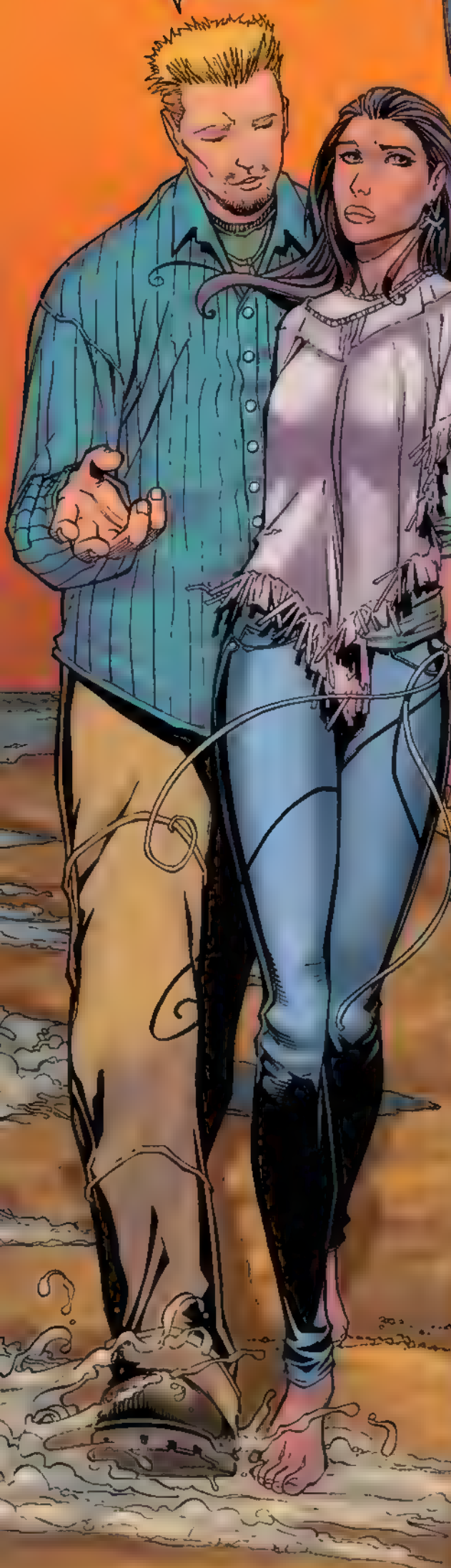
I THOUGHT IT WAS A PIZZA PLACE, BUT APPARENTLY IT'S ONE OF YOUR... I MEAN, THE PEOPLE IN THE WATER... IT WAS ONE OF THEIR CITIES.

WAS?

ADMIRAL MAYLANDER IS STARTING HIS OWN PRIVATE WAR AGAINST YOU AND CANNON AND ANYONE ELSE WHO CAN BREATHE UNDERWATER LONGER THAN HE CAN.

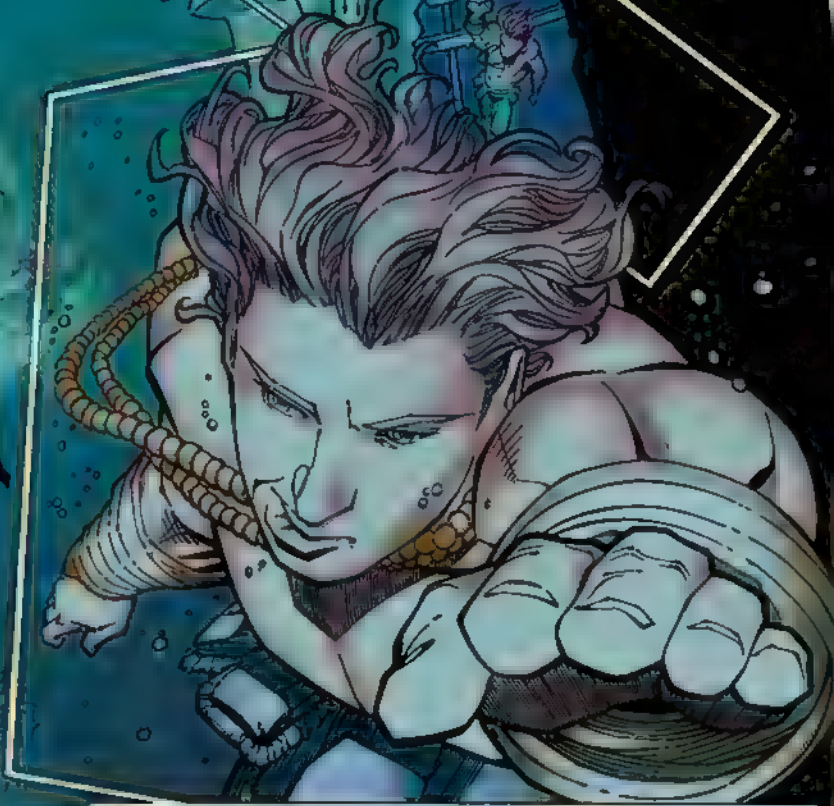
HE MORE THAN ATTACKED IT...

HE **ATTACKED** THE CITY?

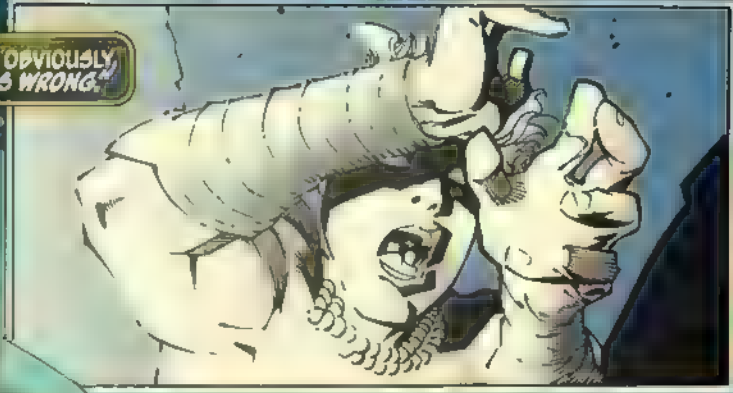


...HE'S TAKEN
IT OVER.

I NEVER THOUGHT HIS
FORCES WOULD STAND A
CHANCE AGAINST YOUR KIND.



"BUT OBVIOUSLY
I WAS WRONG."





"IT APPEARS THAT MAYLANDER
HAS DEVELOPED SOME CUTTING-
EDGE TECHNOLOGY TO LEVEL THE
PLAYING FIELD."

"AND I'M NOT
JUST TALKING
ABOUT NEW SHIPS."

"HE'S GOT EXPERIMENTAL
WEAPONRY DESIGNED
SPECIFICALLY TO DEAL
WITH PEOPLE LIKE CANNON
AND YOURSELF."



...NOT TO MENTION
SOME HIGHLY SPECIALIZED
PROFESSIONALS TRAINED
TO USE THEM.



ADMIRAL.

COMMANDER
JENKINS.



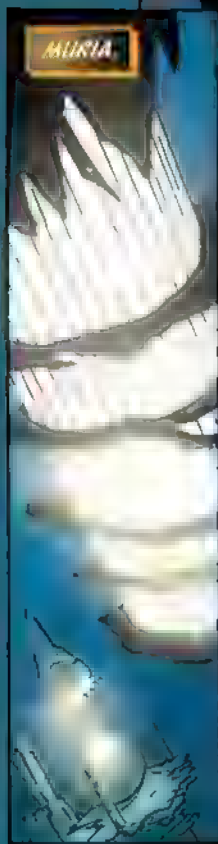
BETA TEAM HAD A
CHANCE TO GET THEIR FEET
WET. WE PICKED UP A *FISH
FACE* IN THE NORTHERN SECTOR
OF THE CITY. HE DIDN'T PUT UP
MUCH OF A FIGHT. THE
STINGRAY PROVED
EFFECTIVE.

IT MUST HAVE
BEEN ONE OF THE LOWER
LEVEL ONES THOUGH. THERE
WAS NO *FORMATION
DISRUPTION*... JUST
TERMINATION.

VERY GOOD,
COMMANDER.

KEEP
YOUR MEN ON
STANDBY.

I MAY NEED
YOU *SOONER*
THAN LATER.



MURIA

HOW COULD I LET
THIS HAPPEN?

AN ENTIRE CITY
LOST... MY CITY.

WHEN I SEE THEIR FACES, WHAT
WOULD MY PEOPLE SAY
IF THEY COULD SPEAK?

WOULD THEY SEE ME ANY
DIFFERENTLY THAN I SEE
THE COUNCIL? WERE THEY
NOT MINE TO PROTECT, AND
DID I NOT FAIL THEM...

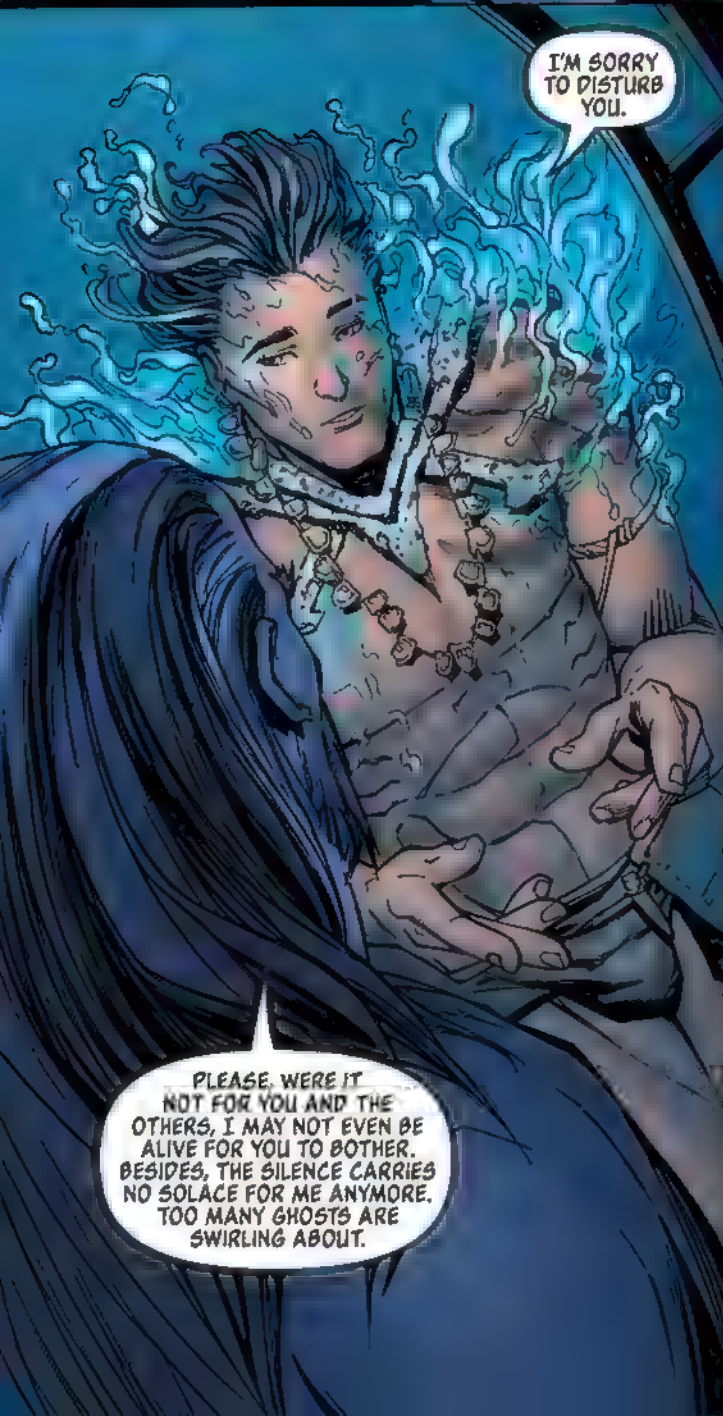


MISERABLY

I'M SORRY
TO DISTURB
YOU.

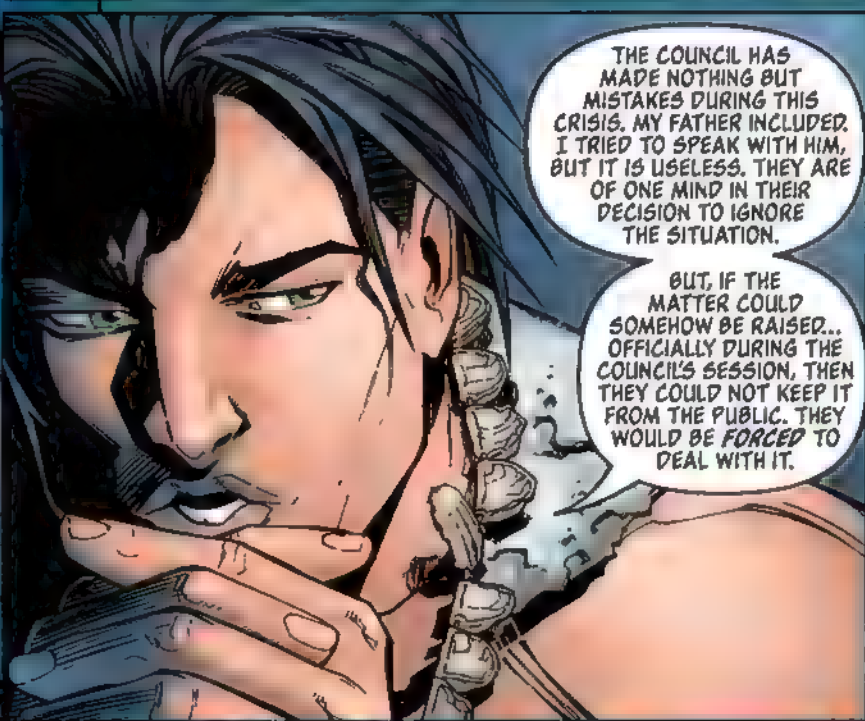
WHAT CAN
I DO FOR
YOU?

ACTUALLY, I
WANTED TO TALK
ABOUT WHAT I
MAY BE ABLE TO
DO FOR YOU.



THE COUNCIL HAS
MADE NOTHING BUT
MISTAKES DURING THIS
CRISIS. MY FATHER INCLUDED.
I TRIED TO SPEAK WITH HIM,
BUT IT IS USELESS. THEY ARE
OF ONE MIND IN THEIR
DECISION TO IGNORE
THE SITUATION.

BUT, IF THE
MATTER COULD
SOMEHOW BE RAISED...
OFFICIALLY DURING THE
COUNCIL'S SESSION, THEN
THEY COULD NOT KEEP IT
FROM THE PUBLIC. THEY
WOULD BE FORCED TO
DEAL WITH IT.

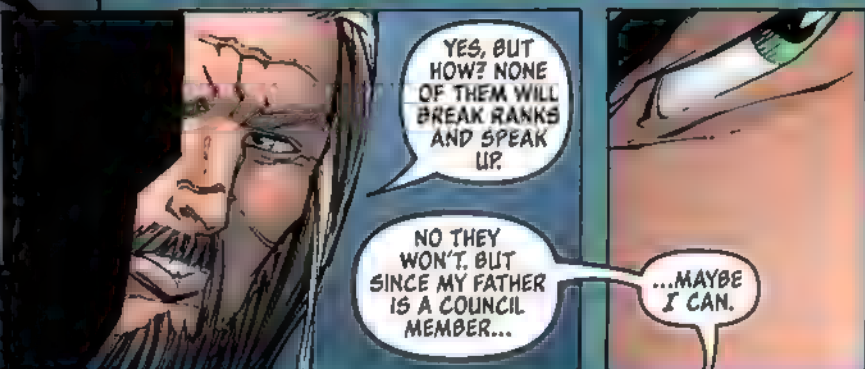


PLEASE, WERE IT
NOT FOR YOU AND THE
OTHERS, I MAY NOT EVEN BE
ALIVE FOR YOU TO BOTHER.
BESIDES, THE SILENCE CARRIES
NO SOLACE FOR ME ANYMORE.
TOO MANY GHOSTS ARE
SWIRLING ABOUT.

YES, BUT
HOW? NONE
OF THEM WILL
BREAK RANKS
AND SPEAK
UP.

NO THEY
WON'T. BUT
SINCE MY FATHER
IS A COUNCIL
MEMBER...

...MAYBE
I CAN.





DAMMIT, JANINE, THEM FLAPJACKS AIN'T GONNA SERVE THEMSELVES!

MISS, IS MY WATCH BROKEN OR IS IT YOU? I ORDERED MY OMELET AN HOUR AGO.

SORRY, SIR.



NEAT TRICK.



SORRY, I DON'T KNOW WHY I DID THAT. AS IF USING A SPOON IS SUCH A BURDEN.

THAT'S OKAY. NOW IF YOU COULD ONLY TURN THAT WATER INTO WINE, THEN WE COULD HAVE OURSELVES A REAL PARTY.



I TOLD YOU I WOULD COME THROUGH FOR YOU.

WHAT IS IT?

IT'S YOUR FATHER'S ADDRESS. MY FRIEND IN PERSONNEL LET HER FINGERS DO THE WALKING THROUGH 'M' AND VIOLA.



I GUESS HE GOT TIRED OF LIFE ON THE ROAD AND GOT A LITTLE PLACE SOUTH OF LAS VEGAS NEAR A DUSTBOWL CALLED BOULDER CITY.

CHANCE, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU.

YOU COULD LET ME CONTROL THE RADIO?

YOU DIDN'T
HAVE TO COME
WITH ME.

ARE YOU
KIDDING ME? I
JUST FOUND YOU
AGAIN; THERE'S NO WAY
I WAS GOING TO LET
YOU LEAVE.

BESIDES...
I LOVE ROAD
TRIPS.



ASPEN
Vol. 2

#5
OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Five of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
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22 HARRISON OF
THE CAPITOL CITY

MOST OF THE WORLD
IS IN THE DARK ABOUT
WHAT LIES BELOW.

THEY GAZE INTO THE
UNKNOWN AND DREAM
ABOUT WHAT WONDERS
IT MAY HOLD.

NOT ME. I
KNOW WHAT
IT HOLDS.

SOME WOULD VIEW
THIS AS A BURGEONING
SPECIES, BUT I SEE IT
AS A GROWING ARMY.

AND LET ME TELL YOU, THERE
IS NOTHING WONDROUS
ABOUT THIS DISCOVERY.

"PART OF ME CAN EMPATHIZE WITH THESE MEN OF SCIENCE. THEIR OBJECTIVE VIEW OF THE WORLD MUST SEE THESE SIGNS BELOW THE SURFACE AS MIRACULOUS. I CANNOT IMAGINE THEY EVER THOUGHT THAT THEY WOULD MAKE CONTACT WITH SUCH AN ADVANCED FORM OF LIFE. ONLY TO BRING ABOUT THEIR DESTRUCTION."

"IF IT WERE LEFT TO THEM, WE'D PROBABLY BE HANDING OUT THE BIGGEST WELCOME MAT IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD WE COME IN PEACE... BLAH, BLAH, BLAH."

"BUT THEY ARE NOT IN CHARGE. THIS IS MY CALL. I AM A MAN OF WAR AND FOR ME IT'S ALL SUBJECTIVE... VERY SUBJECTIVE."

"EVENTUALLY IN LIFE, ALL THINGS COME FULL CIRCLE. THE NEW MODEL FOR WAR IS THE SAME AS THE OLD—THE BEST DEFENSE IS A GOOD OFFENSE. HISTORY IS LITTERED WITH THE DEAD BODIES OF THOSE WHO TRIED TO AVOID CONFLICT."

"THE GERMAN DIDN'T TRY TO ASIDE BY HITLER'S NEW RULES, BUT THEY DIDN'T LEARN ABOUT HIS FINAL SOLUTION UNTIL IT WAS ALMOST TOO LATE. THE SAME COULD BE SAID FOR THE INDIANS DURING AMERICAN EXPANSION. SOMETIMES IF YOU WAIT FOR SOMEONE TO PUSH FIRST, YOU NEVER HAVE THE CHANCE TO PUSH BACK."

"I ALREADY WAITED LONGER THAN I SHOULD HAVE AND KALLIAN ALMOST MADE US ALL PAY FOR IT. WE CAN'T WAIT ANY MORE."

"ADMIRAL... WE HAVE SOMETHING."



YOU GO THROUGH THAT STUFF LIKE WATER.

CARE FOR ANOTHER?

YOU READ MY MIND.

IF I HADN'T TAKEN THAT SHORTCUT, WE'D PROBABLY HAVE BEEN THERE BY NOW. GUESS I SHOULD HAVE JUST TRUSTED MAPQUEST.

STILL BEATS WALKING.

BESIDES, I DON'T MIND HAVING A BIT OF EXTRA TIME TO LET MY HEAD STOP SPINNING.

I JUST WISH I DIDN'T FEEL SO ANXIOUS.

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU SAW YOUR DAD?

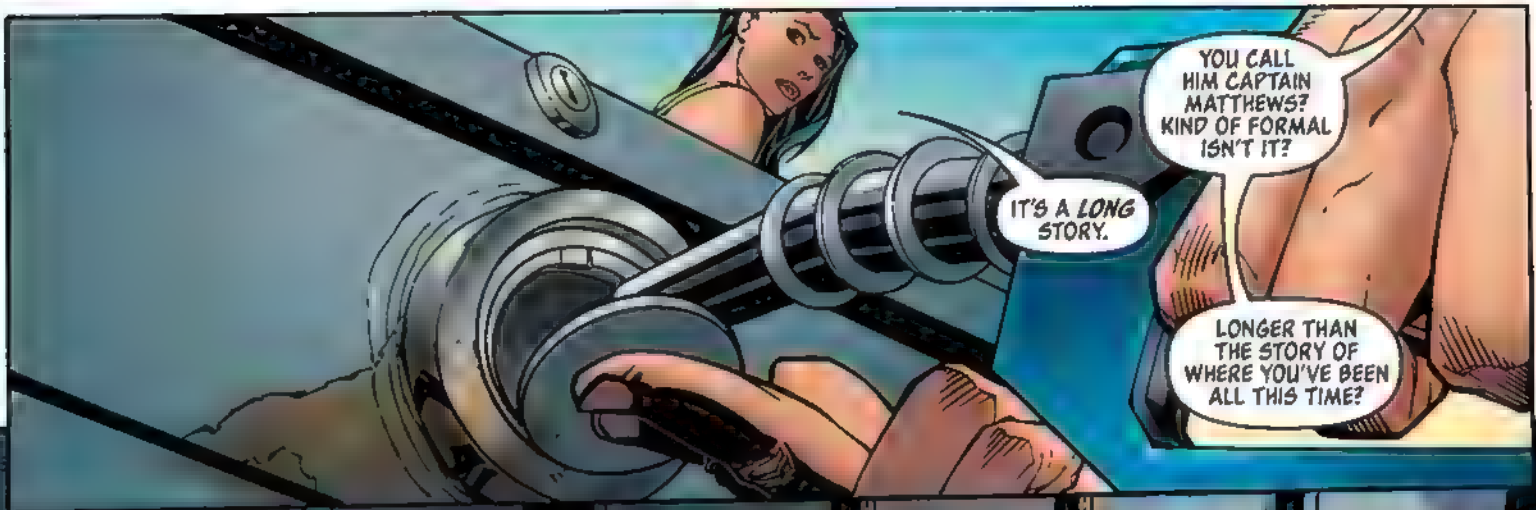
TOO LONG. EVEN BEFORE ALL THIS OTHERWORLD CRAZINESS BEGAN, WE HAD BEEN HIT OR MISS.

I KNOW HOW THAT GOES. MY FATHER NEVER HAD TIME FOR ME... OR MY BROTHER.

THAT WASN'T IT. CAPTAIN MATTHEWS HAS ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR ME, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, HE WAS ALSO A BIT STANDOFFISH. OBSERVATIONAL PARENTING... OR SOMETHING.

AFTER I FIRST WENT TO LIVE WITH HIM, I HAD THESE TERRIBLE NIGHTMARES. WHENEVER I STARTED SCREAMING, HE WOULD COME RUNNING IN LIKE HE WAS WAITING AT THE DOOR THE WHOLE TIME. EVENTUALLY, I DIDN'T HAVE TO SCREAM. I KNEW HE WAS CLOSE BY AND THAT WAS ALL I NEEDED.

MAYBE THAT'S ALL I'M LOOKING FOR RIGHT NOW. JUST TO KNOW HE'S NEARBY WHILE I DEAL WITH THE NIGHTMARE MY LIFE HAS BECOME.



YOU CALL HIM CAPTAIN MATTHEWS? KIND OF FORMAL ISN'T IT?

IT'S A LONG STORY.

LONGER THAN THE STORY OF WHERE YOU'VE BEEN ALL THIS TIME?



IN A NUTSHELL, I WAS KIDNAPPED AND TAKEN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD.

HARD TO BELIEVE ANYONE GETTING THE BETTER OF YOU. I SAW THE WAY YOU DEALT WITH THE LAST GUY WHO TRIED TO PUT HIS HANDS ON YOU-- THAT KILLIAN DUDE.

THIS WAS SOMETHING ELSE... SOMEONE BIGGER.

I DON'T REALLY WANT TO KNOW DO I?

NO, NOT REALLY.

THEY JUST CAN'T SEEM TO LEAVE YOU ALONE FOR TWO SECONDS, HUH?

IT'S GETTING TO LOOK THAT WAY. I CAME HERE BECAUSE I WANTED TO PUT AS MUCH DISTANCE BETWEEN ME AND THAT WORLD AS POSSIBLE. BUT AFTER HEARING ABOUT MAYLANDER'S ATTACK ON SABA, I'M STARTING TO HAVE SECOND THOUGHTS. MAYBE I SHOULD BE HELPING.

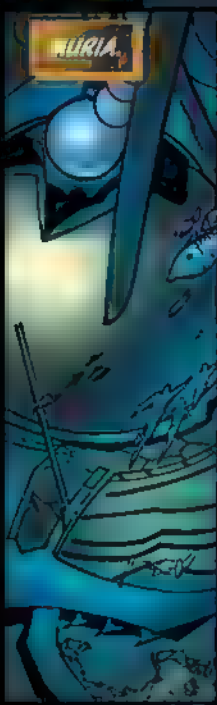
ARE YOU KIDDING? I'VE SEEN THOSE GUYS IN ACTION. CANNON WILL HAVE NO PROBLEM HANDING MAYLANDER'S ASS TO HIM ON A SILVER PLATTER.

BESIDES, IF YOU ASK ME YOU'VE DONE MORE THAN ENOUGH. I MEAN WHO DIED AND MADE YOU THEIR SAVIOR ANYWAY?

UM, I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN...



IT'S OKAY.



UNLESS THERE IS ANY OTHER MATTER TO DISCUSS, I WILL ADJOURN THIS EIGHTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE COUNCIL.

EXCUSE ME, HEAD COUNCIL MEMBER ALDEN, I WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION REGARDING THE ATTACK ON SABA.

THAT MATTER HAS ALREADY BEEN DECIDED UPON.

I WOULD LIKE TO REVISIT IT.

SUCH A REQUEST CAN ONLY COME FROM A MEMBER OF THIS COUNCIL.

ACCORDING TO ARTICLE SIXTY-TWO, BEING THE SON OF THE SEVENTH SEAT OF THE COUNCIL, I AM A MEMBER OF THIS COUNCIL AND HAVE AN EQUAL VOICE TO YOURS, FATHER.

BUT AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE, SIPHON, THE SEVENTH SEAT IS OCCUPIED. THE ARTICLE YOU SPEAK OF REFERS TO EMERGENCIES INVOLVING INJURY OR IMPAIRMENT THAT MAY KEEP A COUNCIL MEMBER FROM PERFORMING THEIR DUTY.

THAT IS OPEN TO INTERPRETATION. AND FROM WHERE I AM STANDING, IT IS MY FATHER'S JUDGMENT THAT IS IMPAIRING HIS DUTY.

TO REFUSE ME IS TO GO AGAINST THE VERY LAWS THAT PLACE YOU IN YOUR POSITION ABOVE US.

LET HIM SPEAK...

COME ON...

I WANT TO HEAR WHAT HE HAS TO SAY.

VERY WELL, SIPHON. GO AHEAD.



MY FATHER, KINZIN, HAS SPENT HIS LIFE UPON THE COUNCIL. HE IS MORE VERSED IN PUBLIC ADDRESS. I HAD WISHED IT WOULD BE HIM STANDING HERE TODAY TO LEAD THE CHARGE, BUT HE HAS FAILED ME, JUST AS THE COUNCIL HAS FAILED US ALL.

FOR SO LONG WE HAVE MANAGED TO REMAIN UNKNOWN TO THE WORLD ABOVE. BUT THAT IS CHANGING. NOBODY WANTS WAR. BUT WE HAVE BEEN ATTACKED. ONE OF OUR CITIES HAS BEEN DESTROYED, AND ITS CITIZENS HAVE BEEN KILLED.

THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE WOULD BE TO IGNORE IT. IGNORE IT!

IN THEIR DECISION, THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT THEY DO NOT JUST SERVE THE CITY OF MURIA. THEY SERVE US ALL. IT DOES NOT MATTER IF SABA FELL ALONG THE WRONG SIDE OF SOME LINE ON SOME MAP. WHAT MATTERS IS THAT OUR PEOPLE WERE SLAUGHTERED, WITHOUT REASON AND WITHOUT REMORSE.

WE DO NOT LIVE SO DEEP AS TO BE UNAWARE OF HOW THE HUMANS TREAT OTHER LIFE FORMS ON THE PLANET. IF WE RUN AND COWER, WHY SHOULD WE THINK THEY WILL VIEW US ANY DIFFERENTLY THAN A FISH, OR A SEAL, OR A CRAB?

I AM NOT ASKING FOR WAR. BUT WE MUST SHOW THE HUMANS THAT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO THIS PLANET THAN THE WORLD ABOVE.

THERE IS A WORLD BELOW, AND IT BELONGS TO US!

CHECK YOU
OUT, SIPHON.

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DO
IT... STANDING UP THERE IN
FRONT OF PRACTICALLY THE
ENTIRE CITY, TALKING AS IF
IT WERE JUST YOU TWO OF US.

I SURE AS HELL
COULDN'T DO IT.

WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT
OUR LITTLE SIPHON COULD
BE SO... NERVOUS.

THERE IS NO
WAY I CAN CONVEY
THE HORROR OF WHAT
HAPPENED, BUT PERHAPS
ONE PERSON CAN.

THALASSAR.

SABA WAS
A WONDERFUL
CITY...

KIANI SHOULD
BE SEEING THIS.
WHERE'S SHE?

I'VE KNOWN HER LONG
ENOUGH TO FIGURE OUT
WHERE SHE MIGHT BE.

SHE CRADLES HER INDEPENDENCE
AND THRIVES ON HER ABILITY TO
TAKE CARE OF THINGS HERSELF.
SHE CANNOT STAND THAT WHICH
IS BEYOND HER CONTROL.

WHEN CASQUE AND OUR
OTHER COMRADES WERE
TAKEN BY THE HUMANS AT
SHEPHERD'S FELL, NO ONE
TOOK THE NEWS HARDER
THAN KIAN. BUT THEY WERE
ONLY A FEW FEETERS.

IN SAGA, WE HAVE
ABANDONED AN
ENTIRE WAY.

SHE DOESN'T HAVE TO SAY ANYTHING.
I KNOW SHE WANTS TO GO BACK
THROUGH THE HYDROPORT... EVEN IF IT
MEANS CERTAIN DEATH. SHE WOULD
CUT AND SLICE HER WAY THROUGH AS
MANY ENEMIES AS POSSIBLE BEFORE
SHE FELL. AT LEAST THEN, SHE WOULD
KNOW SHE DID SOMETHING SHE COULD.

NO



I'M SURPRISED TO SEE THE HUMANS VENTURING OUT FROM BEHIND THEIR SHIPS. NOTHING IN THEIR NATURE SO FAR HAS SHOWN ME ANYTHING RESEMBLING THIS.

OR HONOR.



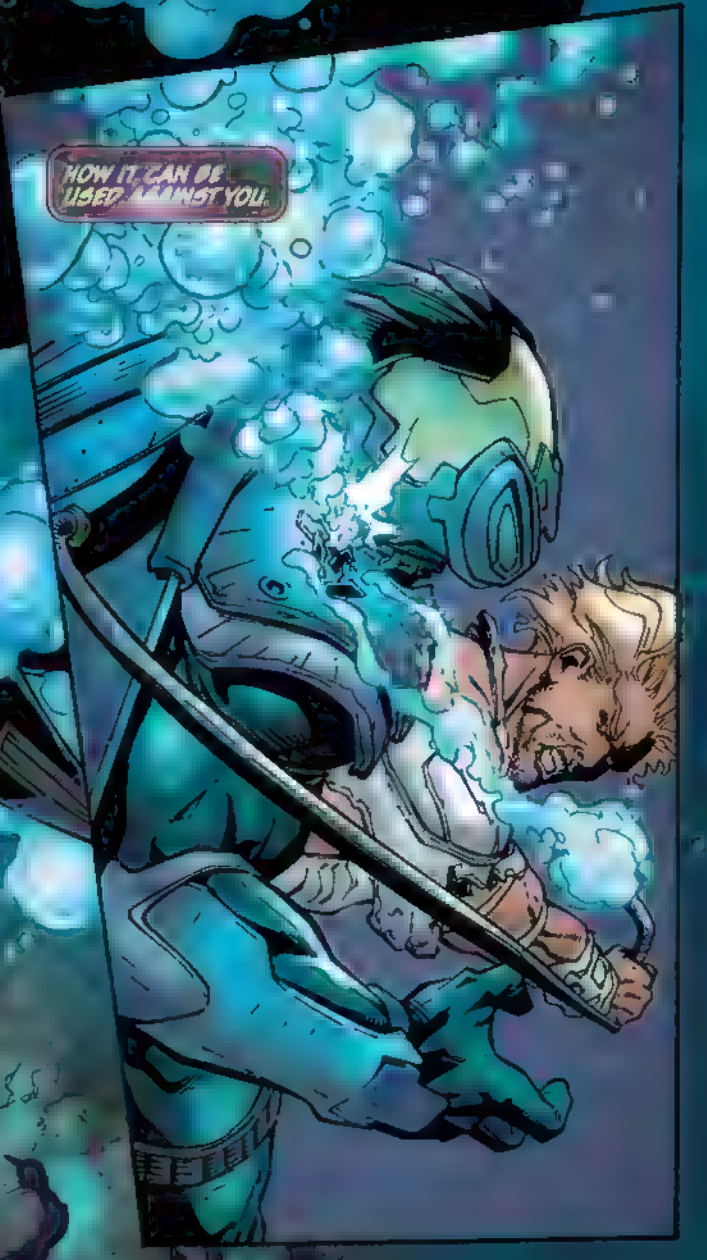


REGARDLESS, THEY'VE
STEPPED DANGEROUSLY
OUT OF THEIR ELEMENT
BY COMING HERE.

IT'S THE MISTAKE
OF ROOKIES.



...OF NOT KNOWING
HOW THE ENVIRONMENT
OF THE BATTLEFIELD
COMES INTO PLAY.



HOW IT CAN BE
USED AGAINST YOU.



AS A WARRIOR, I
HAVE NO SYMPATHY
FOR THEM

THEY SHOULD KNOW
THE IMPORTANCE
OF STUDYING
ONE'S ENEMIES





EVEN THE MOST ADVANCED
WEAPONRY CANNOT ENSURE
VICTORY IF YOU DO NOT
UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU FACE.

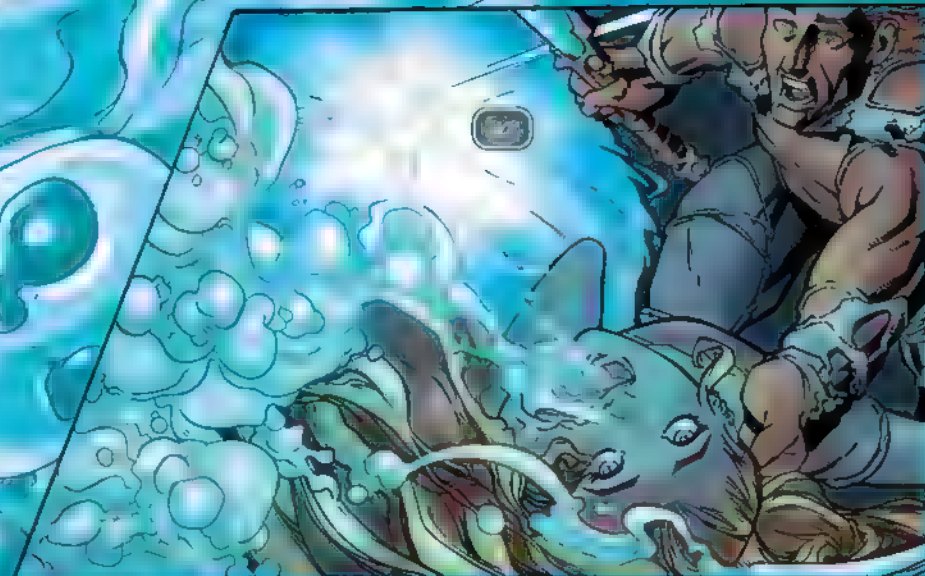
АННННН!

KIAMI

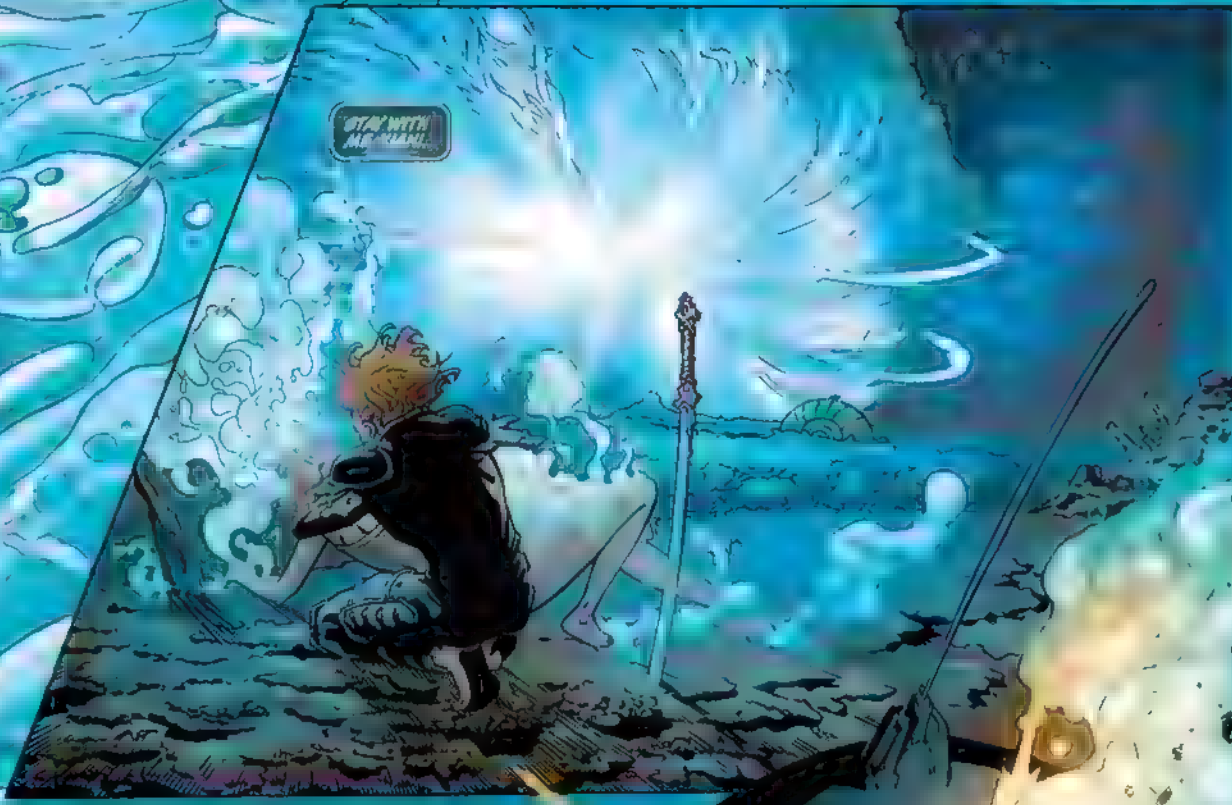
KIAMI



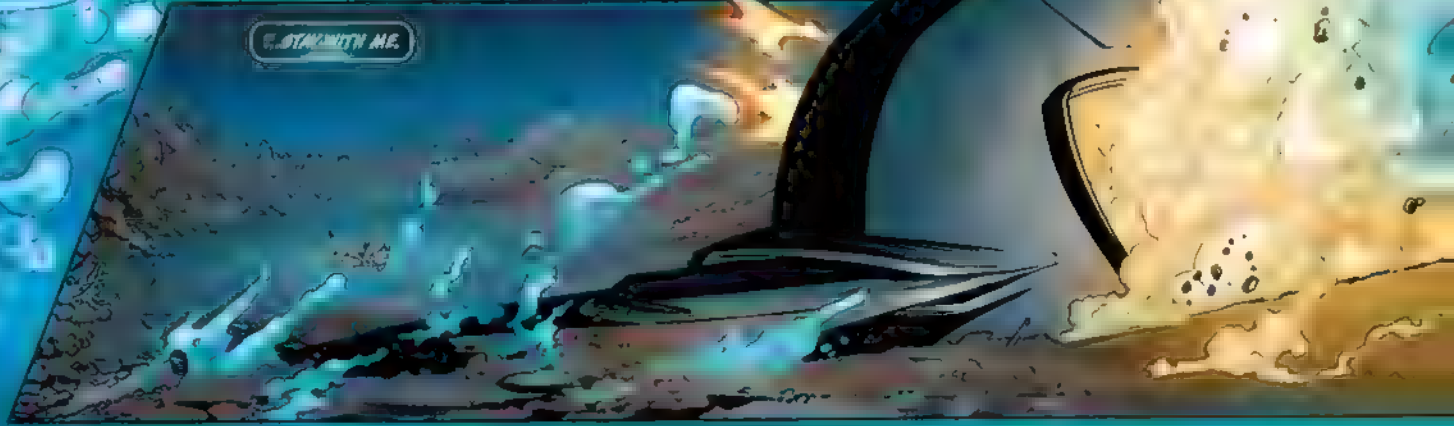
CAAAAAAGSSSQIE!

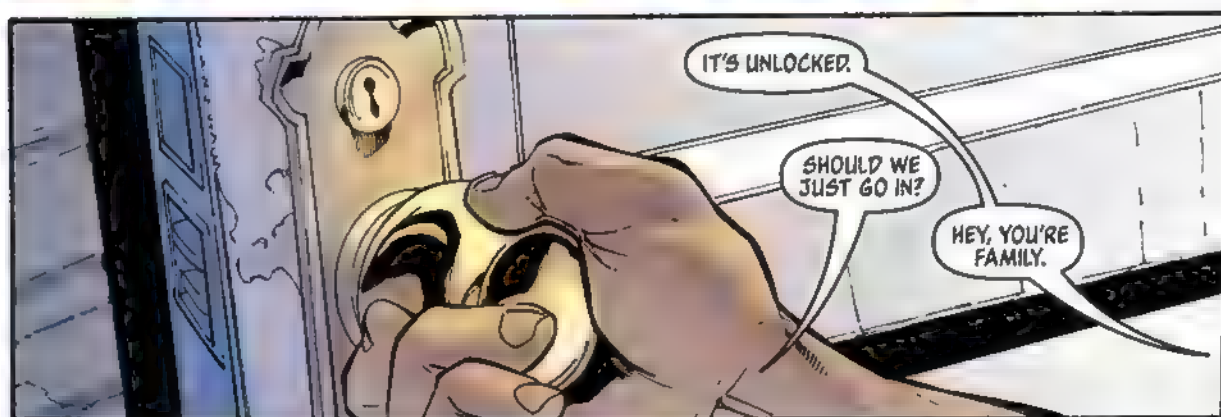
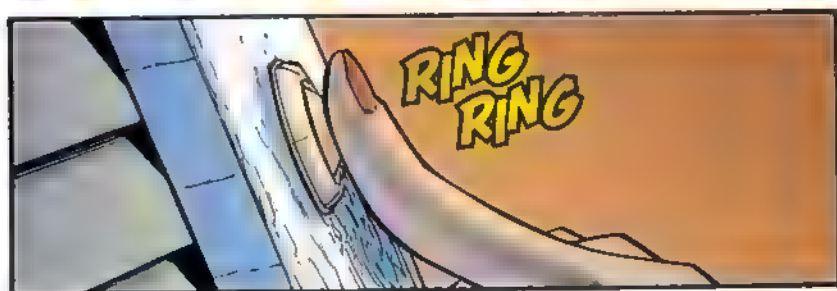
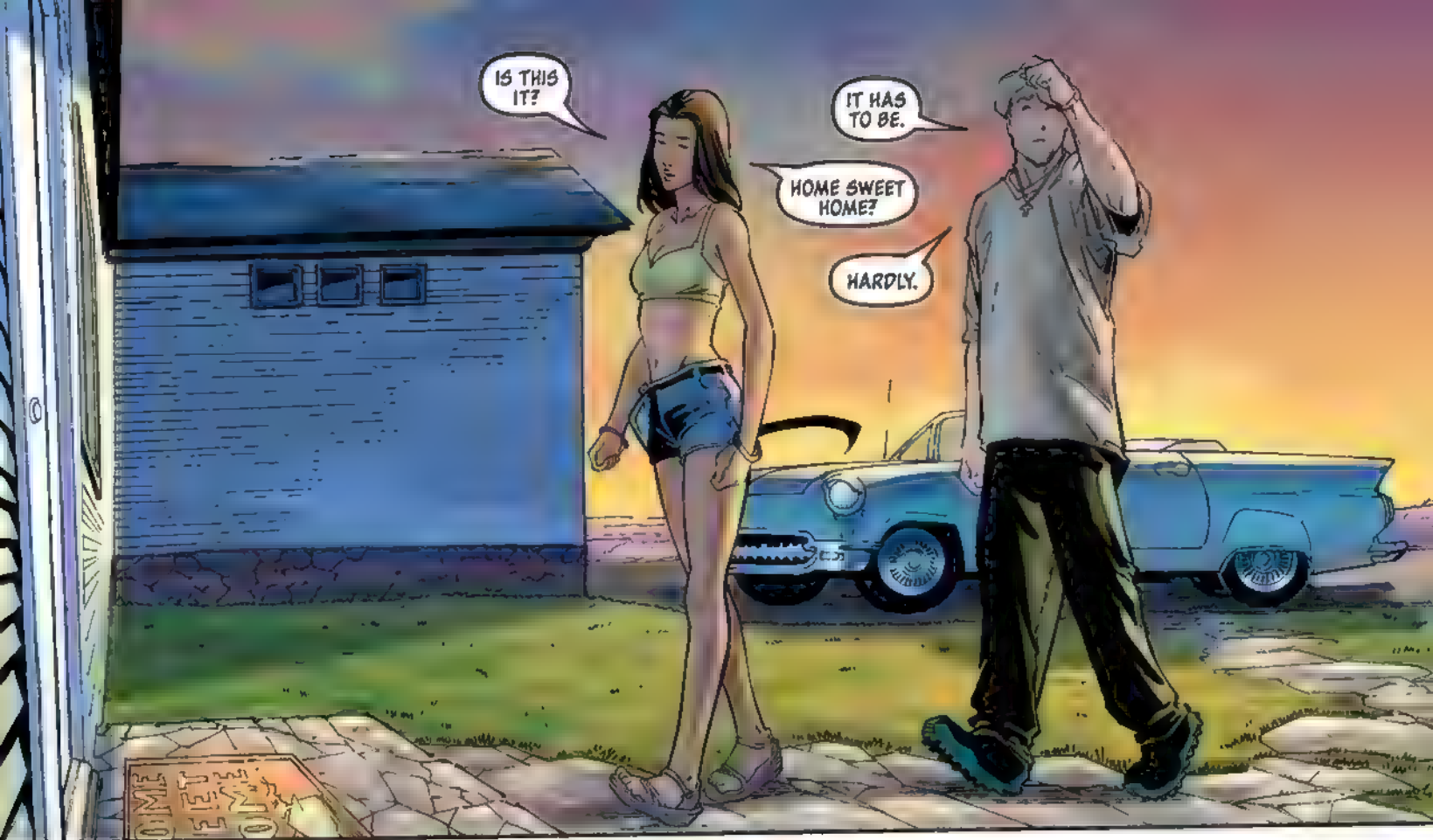


STAY WITH ME!



STAY WITH ME.







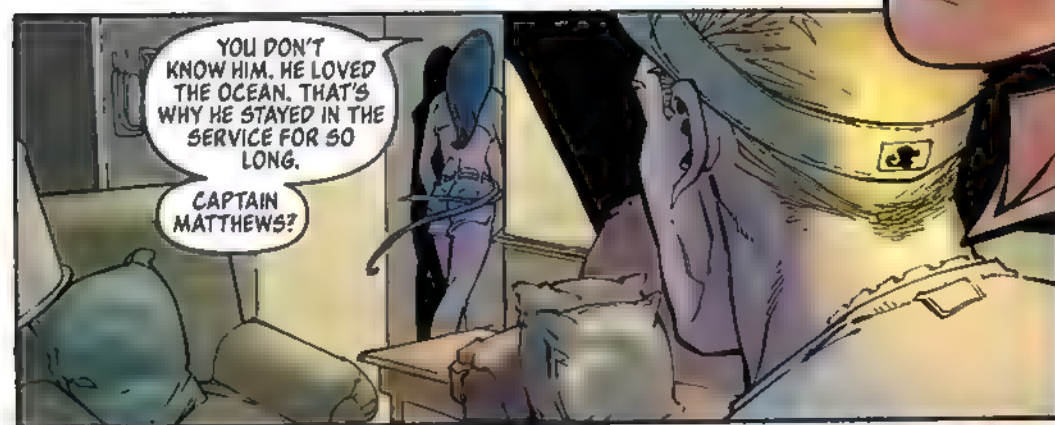
GOOD LOOKING GUY... AND I MEAN THAT IN A VERY HETEROSEXUAL WAY.

THIS IS WEIRD. IT JUST DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT AT ALL. I MEAN, WHY WOULD HE END UP LIVING WAY OUT HERE?

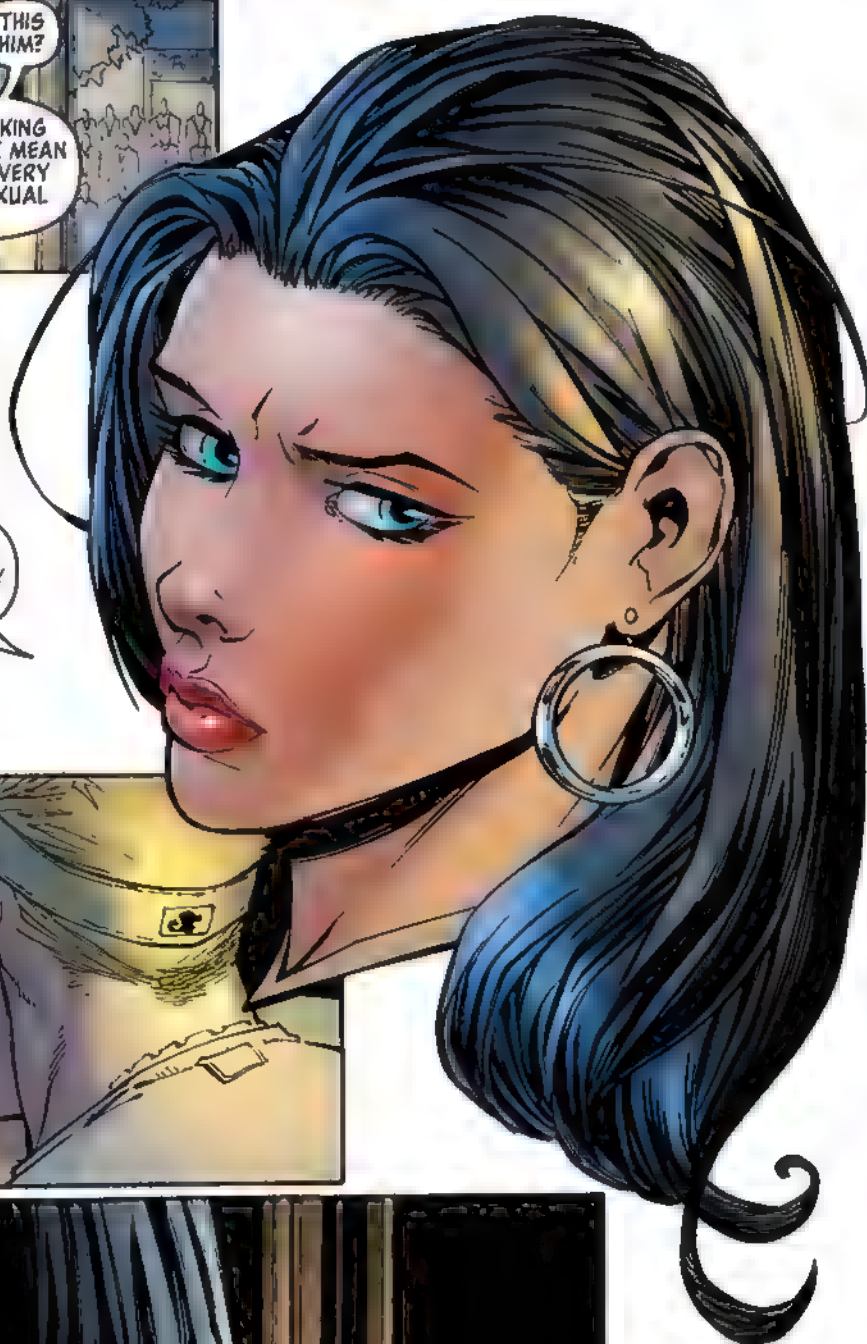
I KNEW THIS GUY IN HIGH SCHOOL... CHAD MURPHY. MAN, HE LOVED CHEESEBURGERS. BUT AFTER WORKING AN ENTIRE SUMMER AT BURGER KING, HE COULDN'T EVEN LOOK AT ONE WITHOUT BECOMING PHYSICALLY ILL.

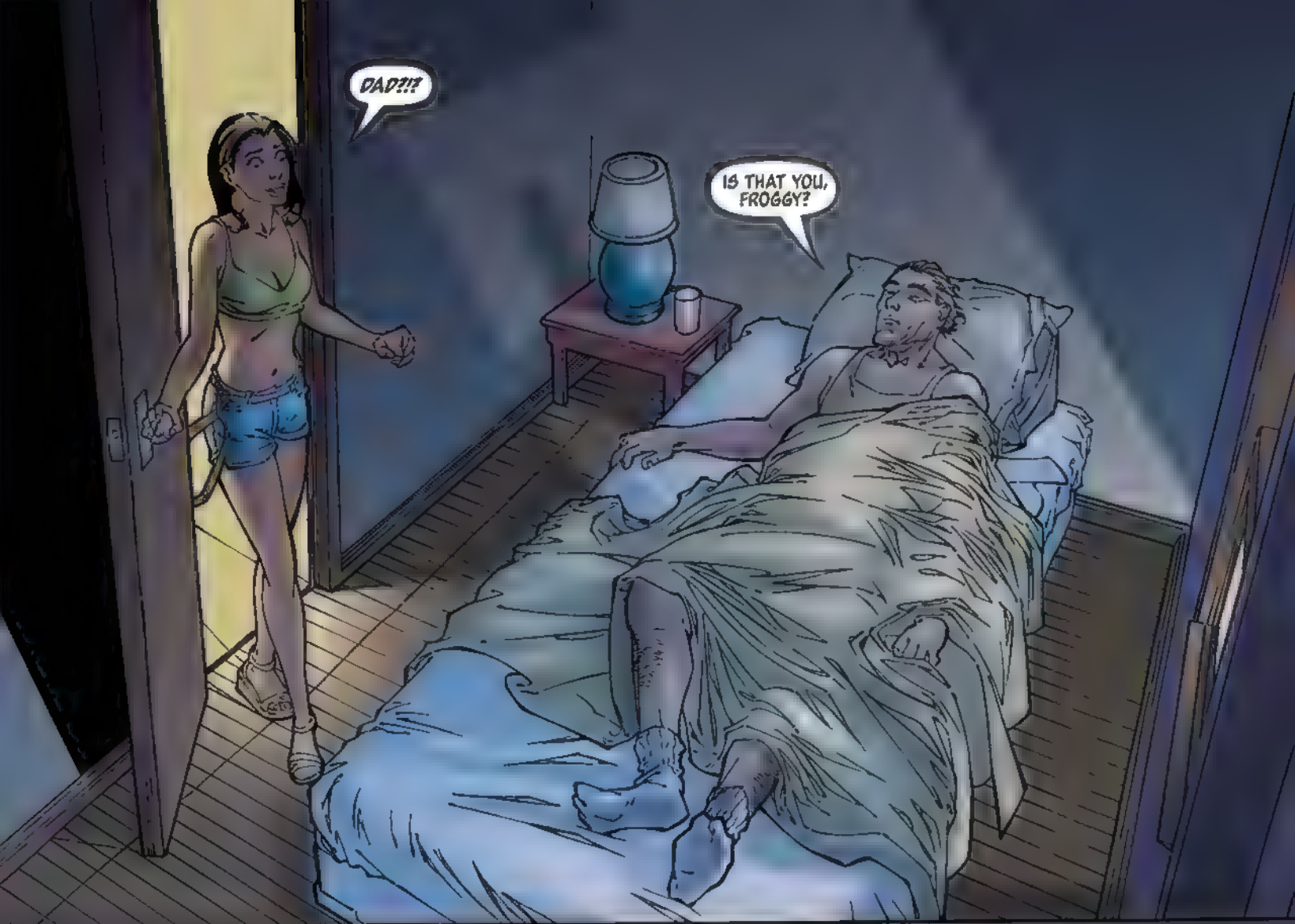
YOU'RE SAYING HE MOVED TO THE DESERT TO GET AWAY FROM BURGER JOINTS?

NO, MY POINT WAS THAT MAYBE YOUR DAD JUST GOT SICK OF THE WATER.



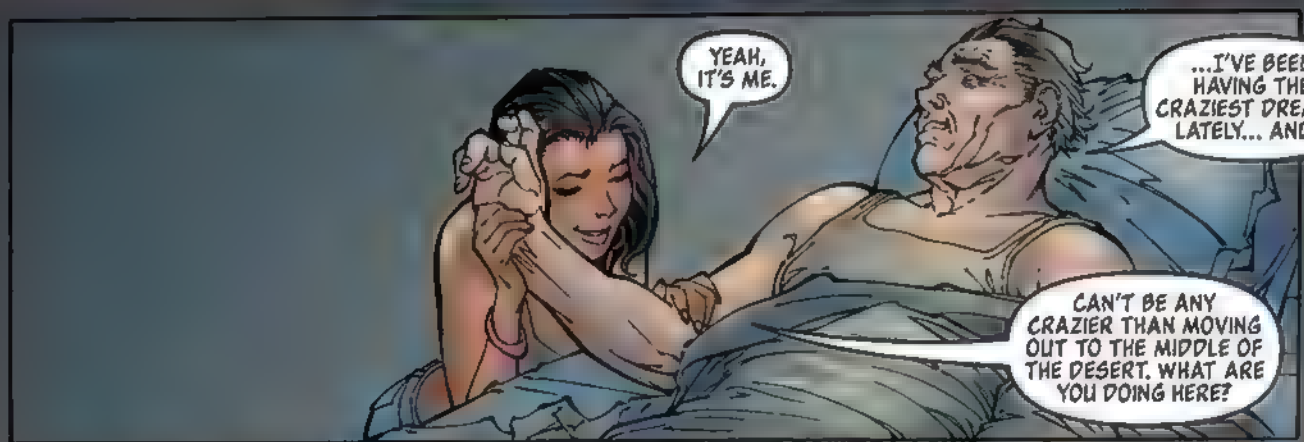
ASPEN...





DAD???

IS THAT YOU, FROGGY?



YEAH, IT'S ME.

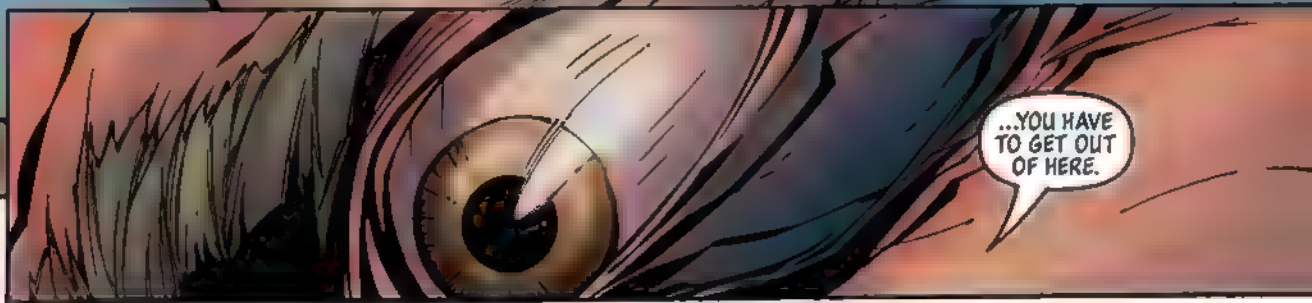
...I'VE BEEN HAVING THE CRAZIEST DREAMS LATELY... AND...

CAN'T BE ANY CRAZIER THAN MOVING OUT TO THE MIDDLE OF THE DESERT. WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

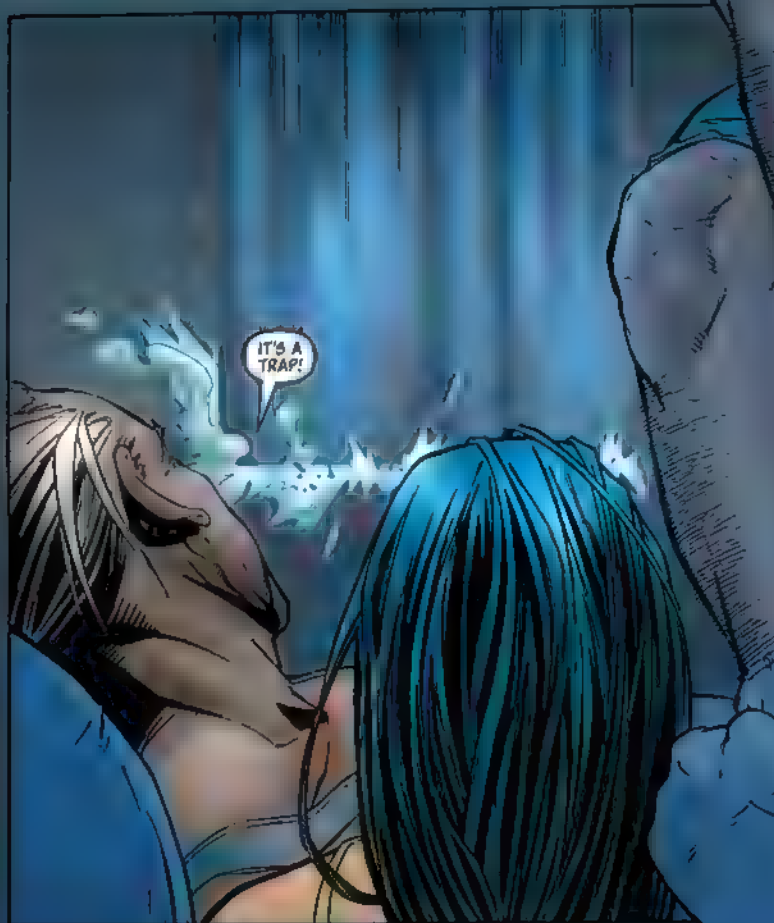


DESERT?... IT'S REAL... BUT THEN...

...ASPEN...



...YOU HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE.





HE KNOWS.

To Be
CONTINUED...



VOL. 2

#6

OF 11

COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Six of Eleven

FATHOM

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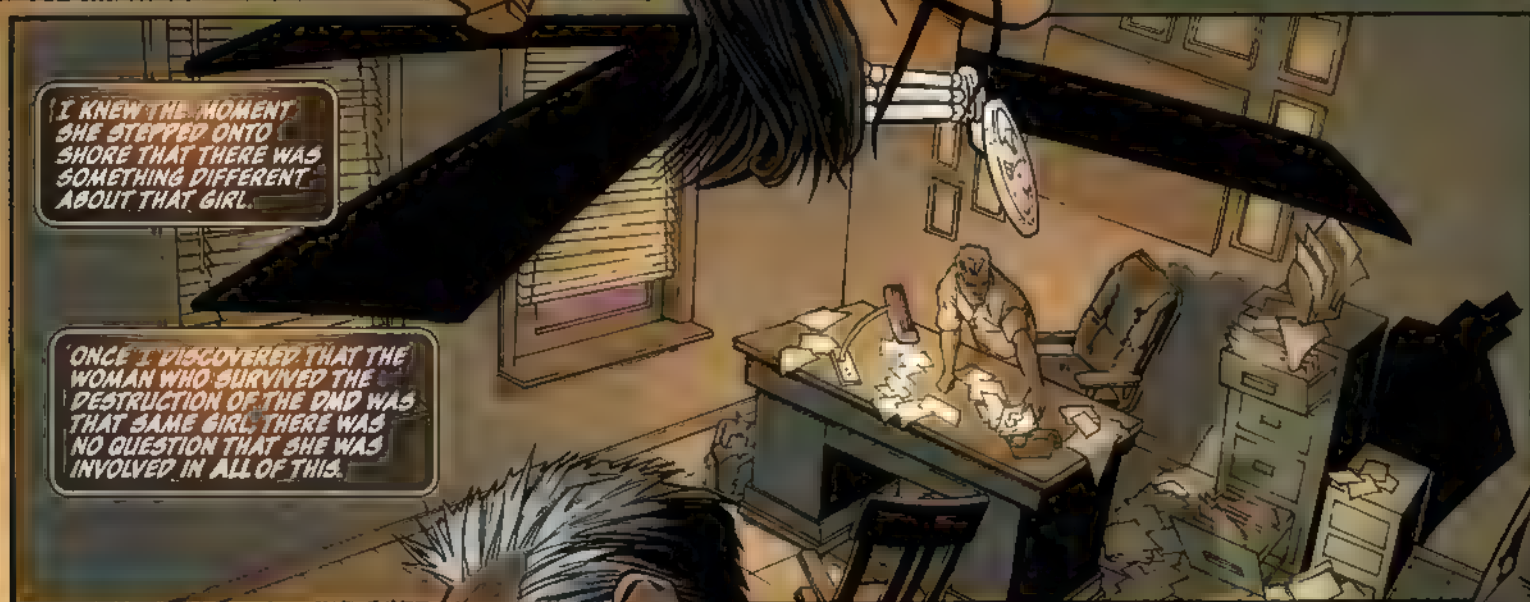
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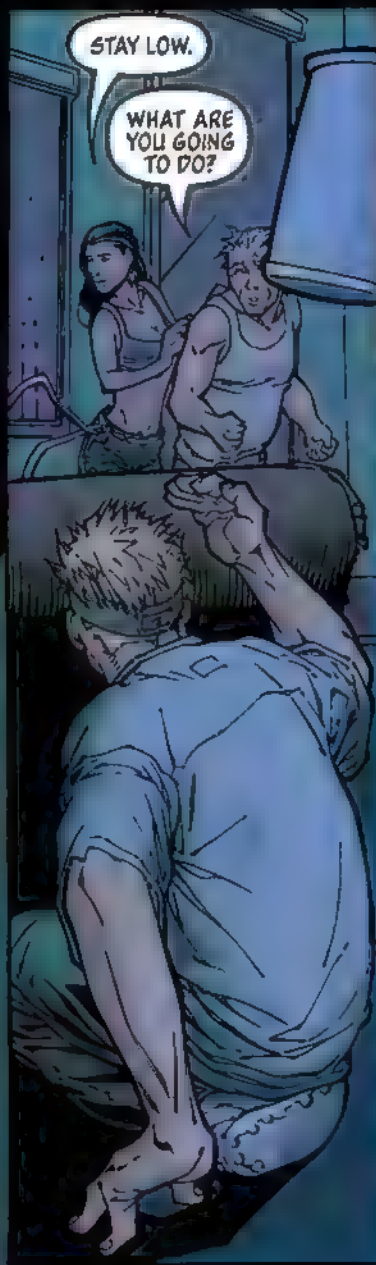
...BUT NOT ANYMORE.

ALPHA TEAM APPROACHING SITE... ETA FOUR MINUTES.

ALPHA TEAM, THIS IS CONTROL... PROCEED WITH CAUTION. TARGET SUBJECT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED... THREATCON DELTA. SUBDULE AND DETAIN.

ALL OTHERS ARE EXPENDABLE.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE STRAYED SO FAR INLAND, ASPEN.







THAT'S QUITE
THE LITTLE
DAUGHTER YOU'VE
GOT THERE.

DON'T I
KNOW IT.

UM... ARE
YOU GUYS
COMING OR
WHAT?



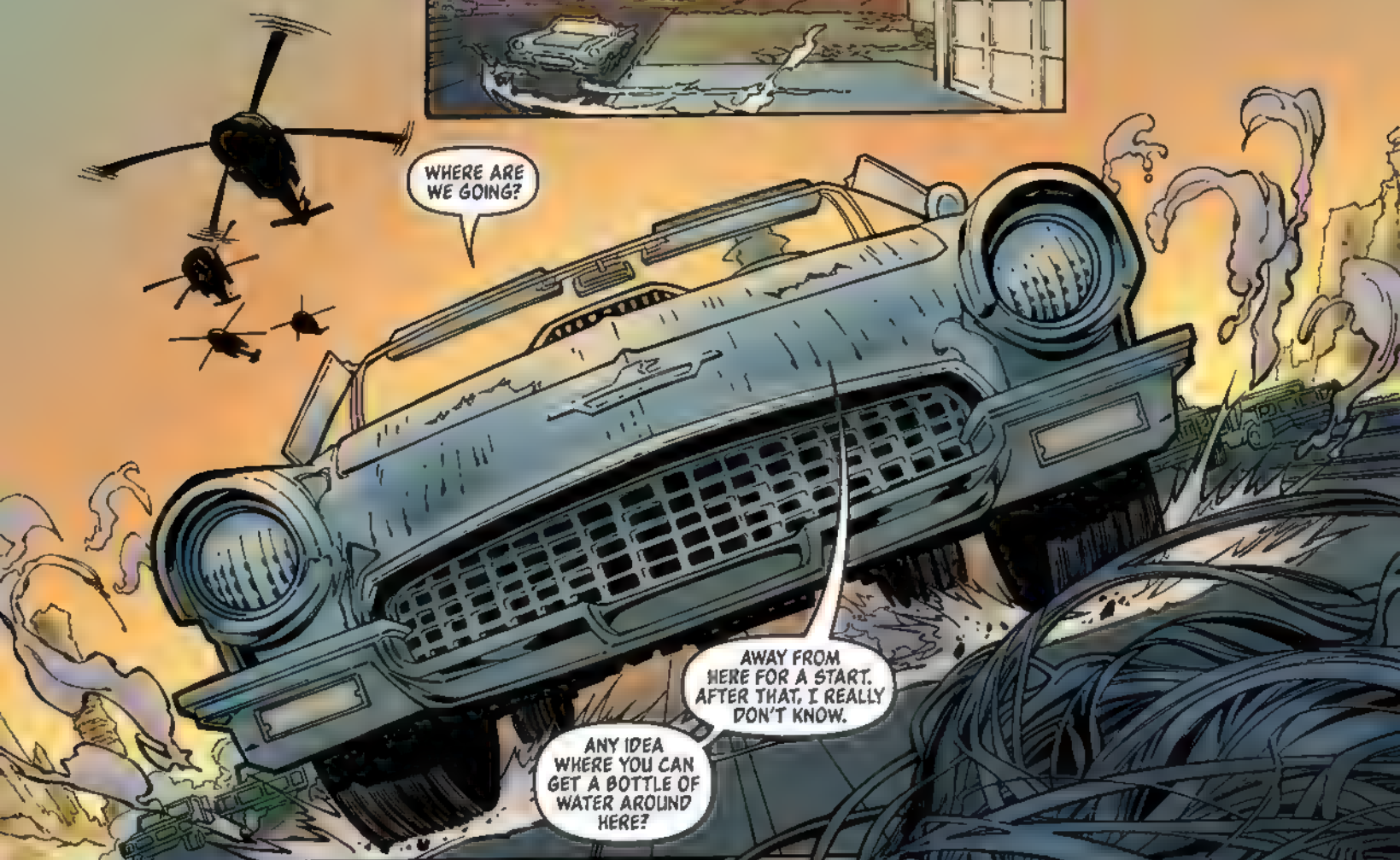
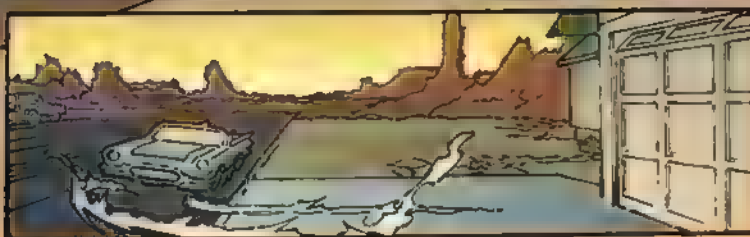
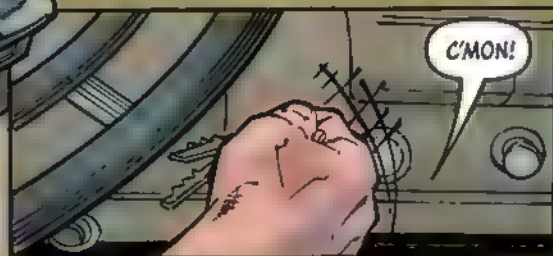
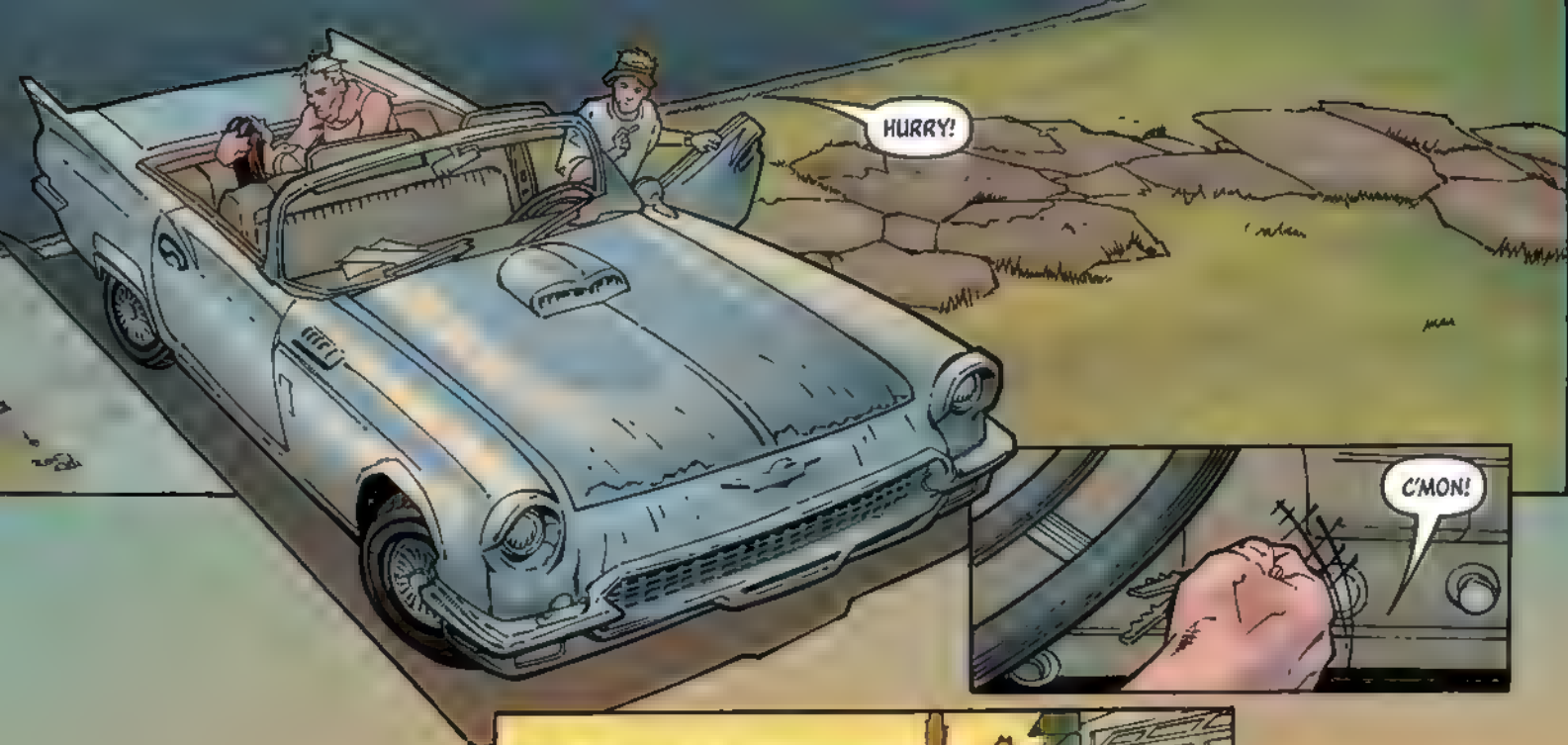
WHERE'D
THEY COME
FROM?

ASPEN!!!



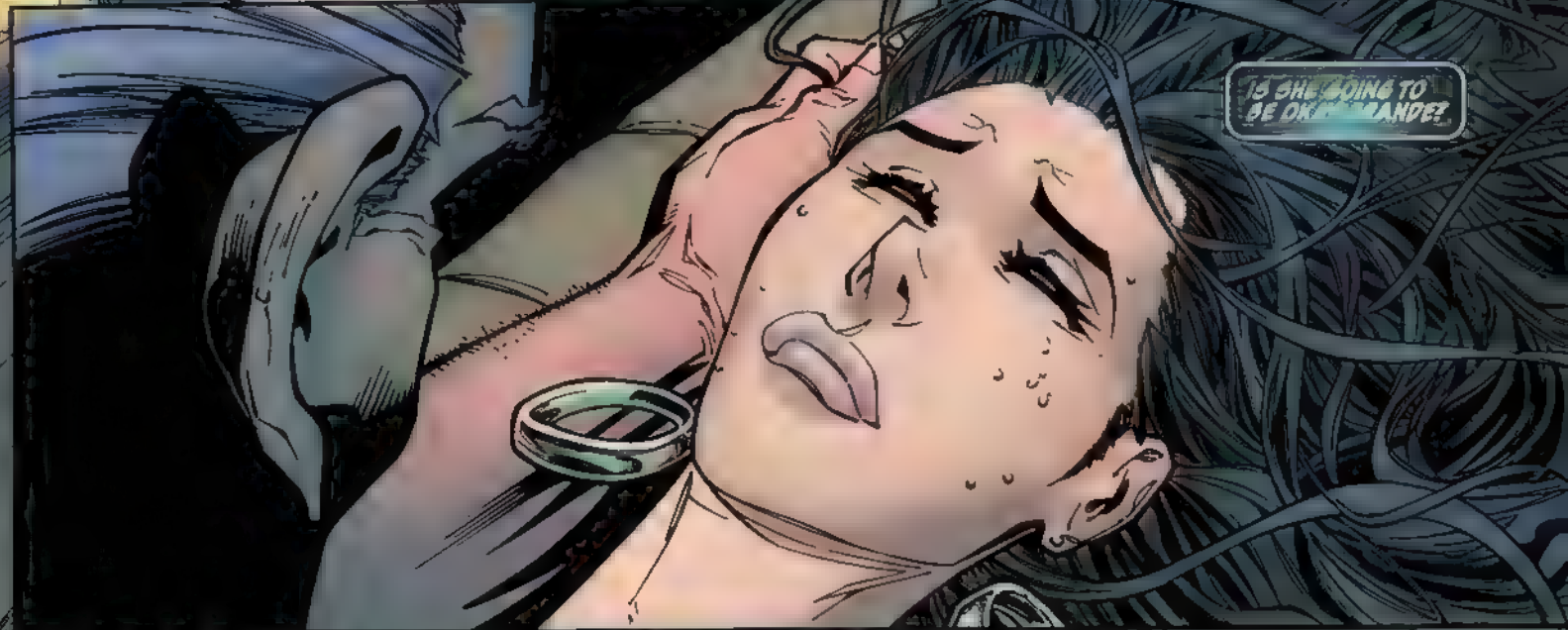
SHE'S STILL
BREATHING, BUT
WE NEED TO GET
HER OUT OF
HERE!

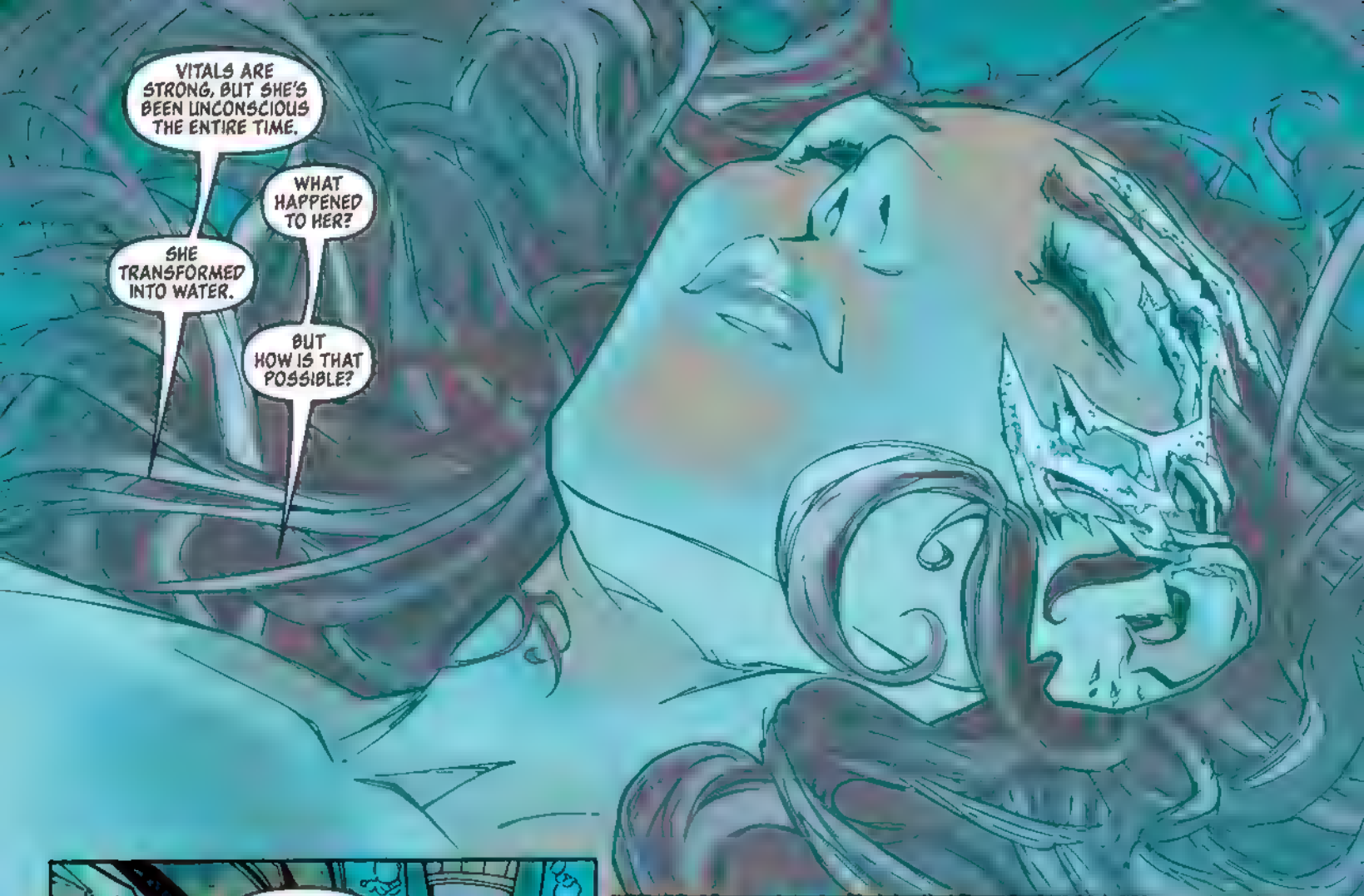
COME ON,
MY CAR IS
THIS WAY.



AWAY FROM
HERE FOR A START.
AFTER THAT, I REALLY
DON'T KNOW.

ANY IDEA
WHERE YOU CAN
GET A BOTTLE OF
WATER AROUND
HERE?





VITALS ARE STRONG, BUT SHE'S BEEN UNCONSCIOUS THE ENTIRE TIME.

WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?

SHE TRANSFORMED INTO WATER.

BUT HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?



ALL I KNOW IS WHAT I SAW.

ONE OF THE HUMANS THAT CAME THROUGH THE HYDROPORT ZAPPED KIANI WITH SOME KIND OF WEAPON. SHE BEGAN TO TRANSFORM RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME.

DO YOU THINK... I MEAN... COULD KIANI BE AN ELITE?



I DON'T KNOW. SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN SOMEWHAT SHUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE SECURITY FORCE, BUT I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE WOULD HAVE KEPT SOMETHING LIKE THAT FROM US.

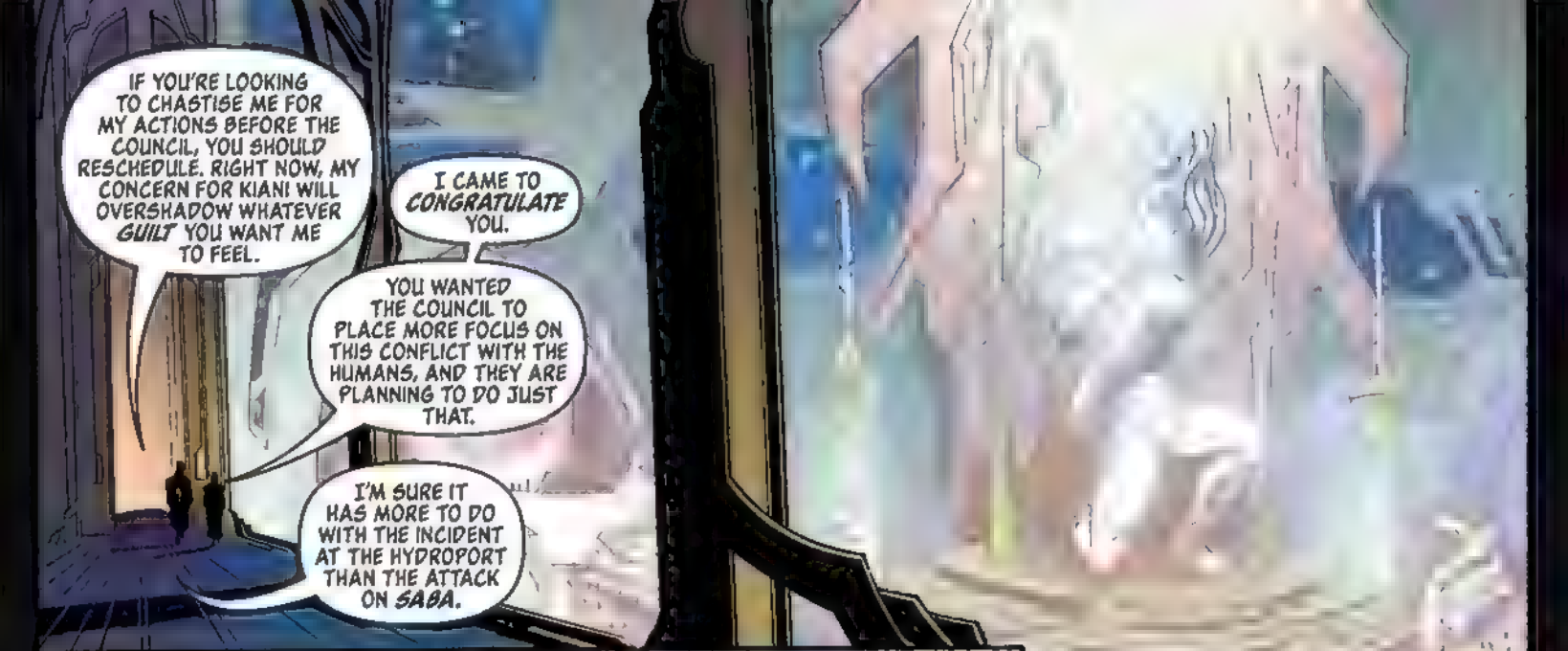
MAYBE WE JUST DON'T KNOW KIANI AS WELL AS WE THOUGHT WE DID.

SIPHON.



I NEED TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

NOW.

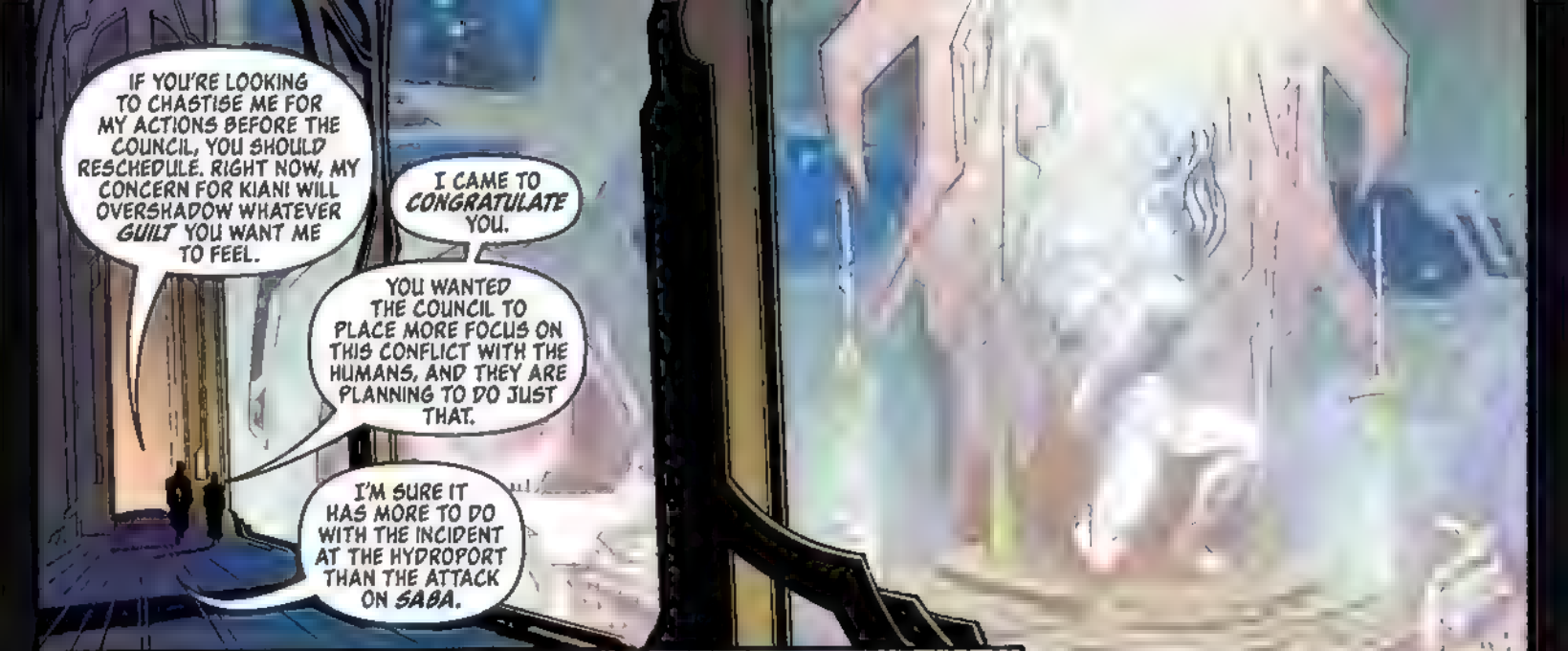
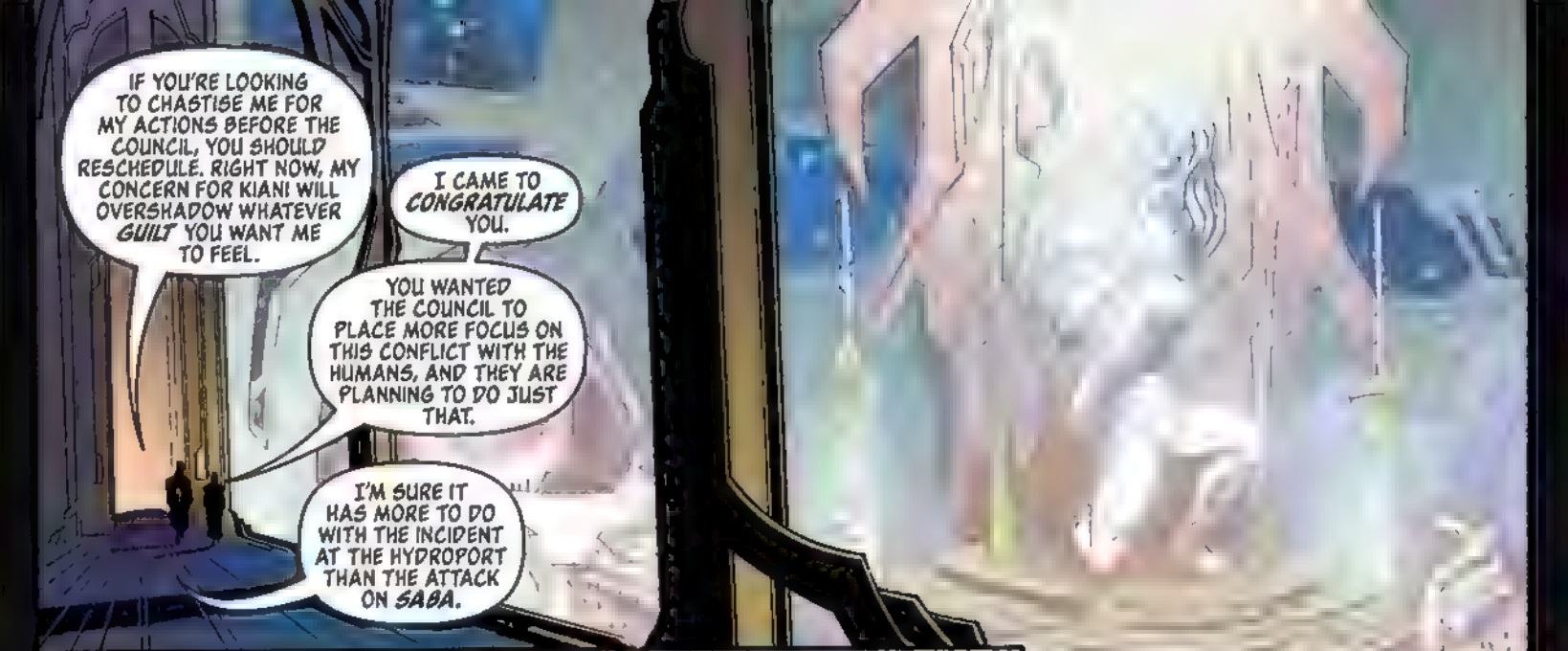


IF YOU'RE LOOKING TO CHASTISE ME FOR MY ACTIONS BEFORE THE COUNCIL, YOU SHOULD RESCHEDULE. RIGHT NOW, MY CONCERN FOR KIANI WILL OVERSHADOW WHATEVER GUILT YOU WANT ME TO FEEL.

I CAME TO CONGRATULATE YOU.

YOU WANTED THE COUNCIL TO PLACE MORE FOCUS ON THIS CONFLICT WITH THE HUMANS, AND THEY ARE PLANNING TO DO JUST THAT.

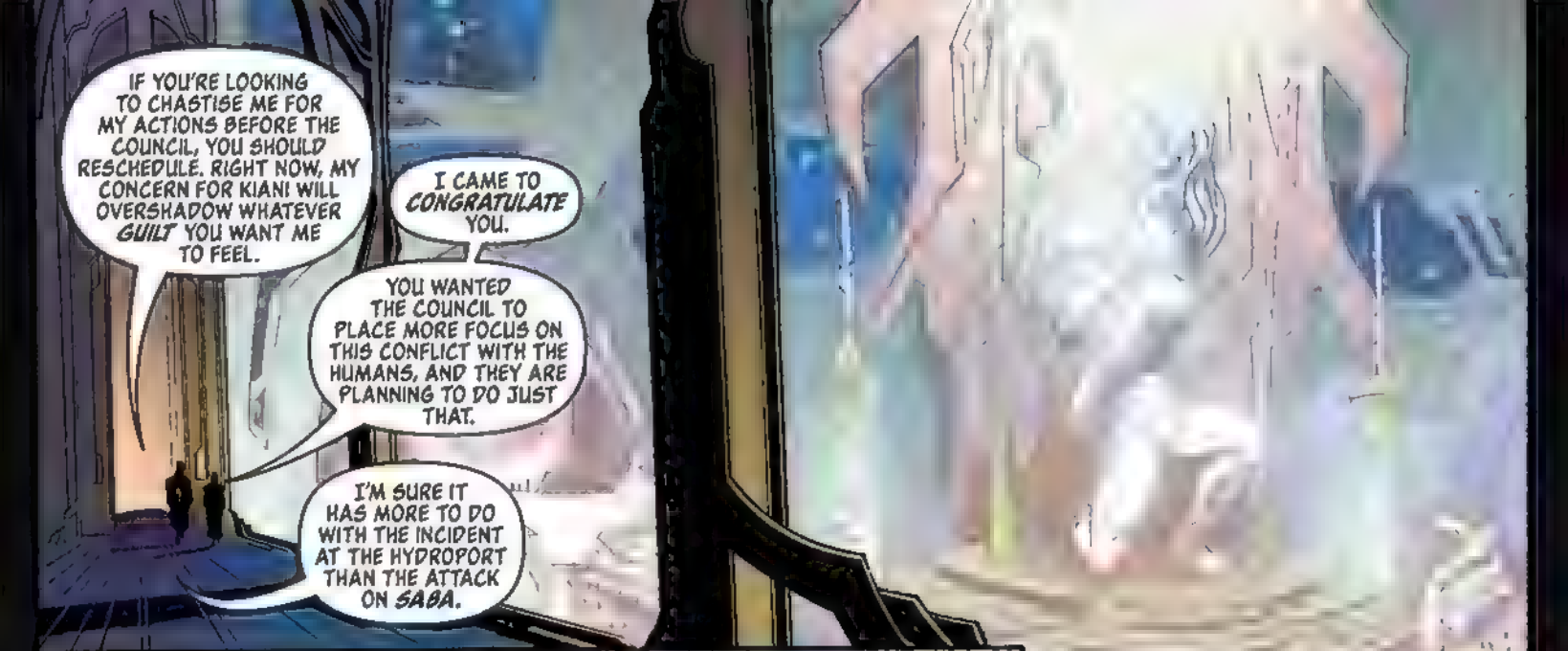
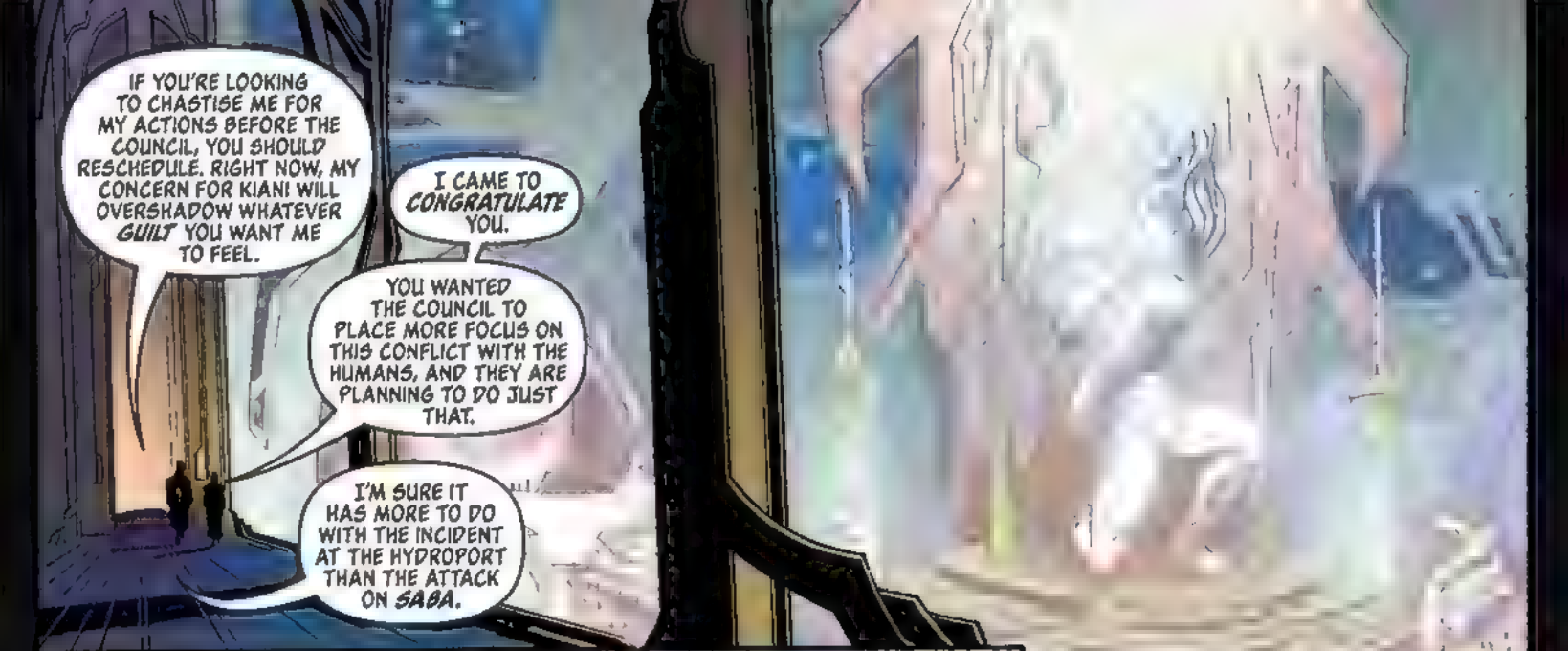
I'M SURE IT HAS MORE TO DO WITH THE INCIDENT AT THE HYDROPORT THAN THE ATTACK ON SABA.



REGARDLESS, YOU GOT WHAT YOU WANTED. THE COUNCIL IS CURRENTLY PREPARING TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE RESPONSE SCENARIOS.

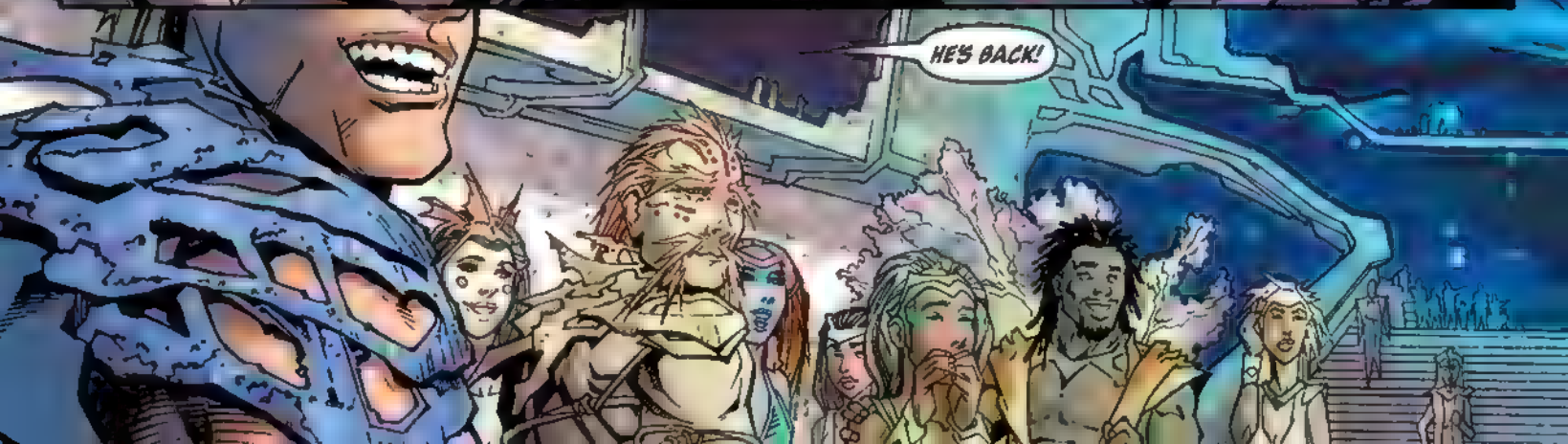
YOU SHOULD BE THERE.

ME?



AFTER YOUR SPEECH, IT WAS DECIDED UPON THAT YOU SHOULD TAKE OVER MY SEAT ON THE COUNCIL PERMANENTLY.

WHAT?!!





CANNON!



STAND
ASIDE. OUT OF
THE WAY.



WELCOME
BACK, CANNON.



WE'VE KEPT
YOUR CELL
VACANT FOR
YOU.

KREEG,
INFORM THE
COUNCIL OF MY
RETURN. I NEED
TO SEE THEM AT
ONCE.

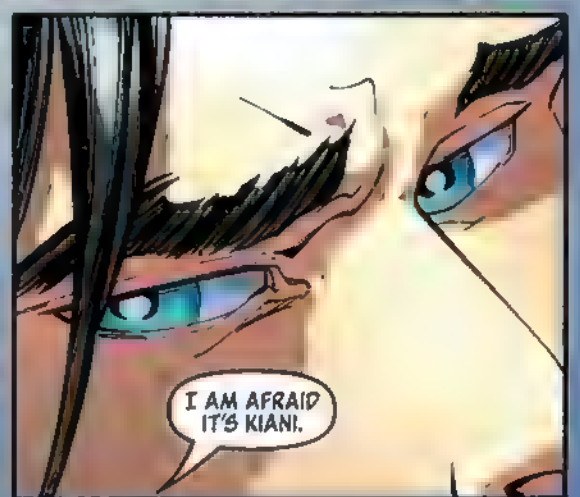
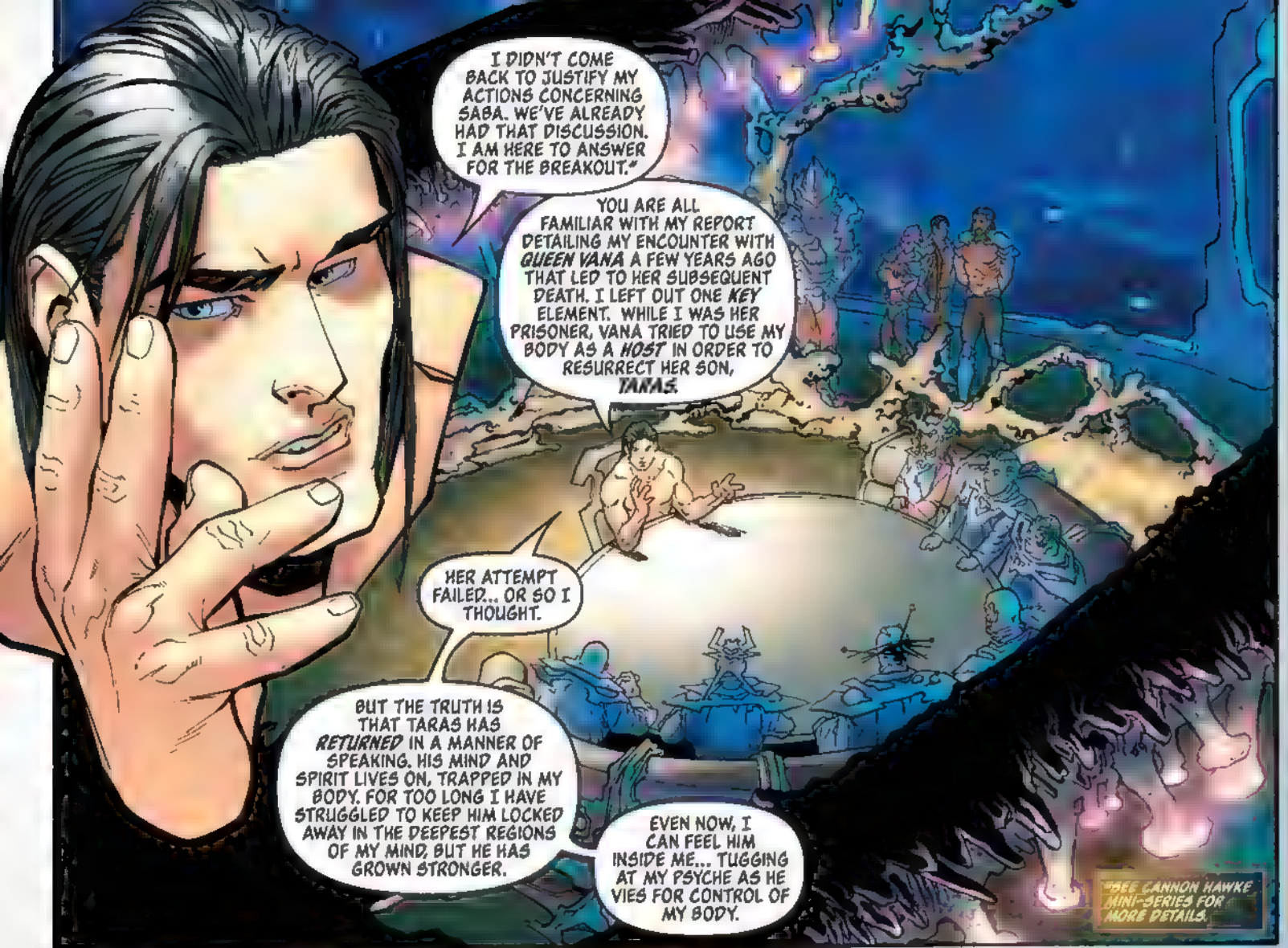


THAT
SOUNDED AN
AWFUL LOT LIKE
AN ORDER.

YES IT DID,
DIDN'T IT? OLD
HABITS DIE
HARD.



TRUST ME.
THEY WILL WANT
TO HEAR WHAT I
HAVE TO SAY.



CASQUE HAD ALWAYS SUSPECTED THAT SHE WAS AN ELITE BLUE. BUT WHILE THE ANCESTRAL BLOODLINE IS NECESSARY, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE. HER PARENTS DIED WHEN SHE WAS SO YOUNG THAT HER HERITAGE WAS ALWAYS IN QUESTION. EVEN CASQUE WAS UNSURE WHAT THE FUTURE WOULD HOLD FOR KIANI.

NEITHER DID SHE. WHATEVER WEAPON THE HUMANS USED AGAINST KIANI, IT MUST HAVE TRIGGERED HER INNATE ABILITIES. SUCH A FORCED TRANSFORMATION MUST HAVE BEEN EXCRUCIATING FOR HER. THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT AFFECT IT MIGHT HAVE ON HER.

CANNON, YOUR SHIP IS READY FOR DEPARTURE IN HANGAR SEVEN. KREEG WANTED ME TO INFORM YOU THAT HE WILL MEET YOU THERE.

TELL HIM WE'RE ON OUR WAY.

WE HAD NO IDEA SHE EVEN HAD THE POTENTIAL.

I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S COMING WITH US TO FIND BIRANHA.

IT WASN'T OPEN FOR DEBATE. GIVEN MY RECENT TRACK RECORD, THE COUNCIL DOESN'T TRUST ME. CAN YOU BLAME THEM?

PERHAPS NOT. BUT FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, I TRUST YOU.

YEAH... A HELL OF A LOT MORE THAN I'LL EVER TRUST KREEG— NO MATTER WHO IS BOUNCING AROUND IN YOUR HEAD.

SIPHON, COME ON.

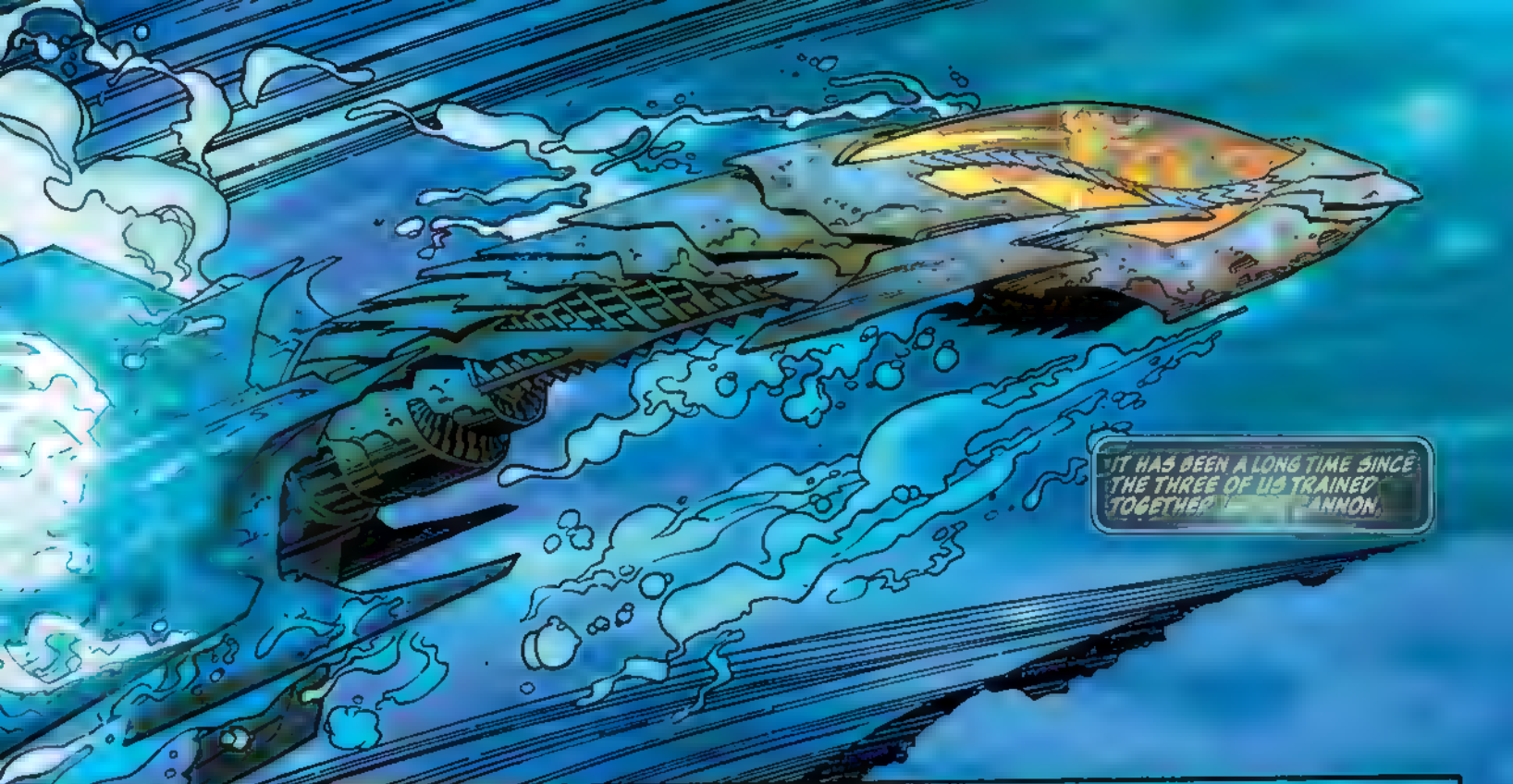
I... I CAN'T GO WITH YOU. I AM NEEDED HERE.

THAT'S OKAY, SIPHON. KREEG WILL TAKE UP TWO SEATS ANYWAY.

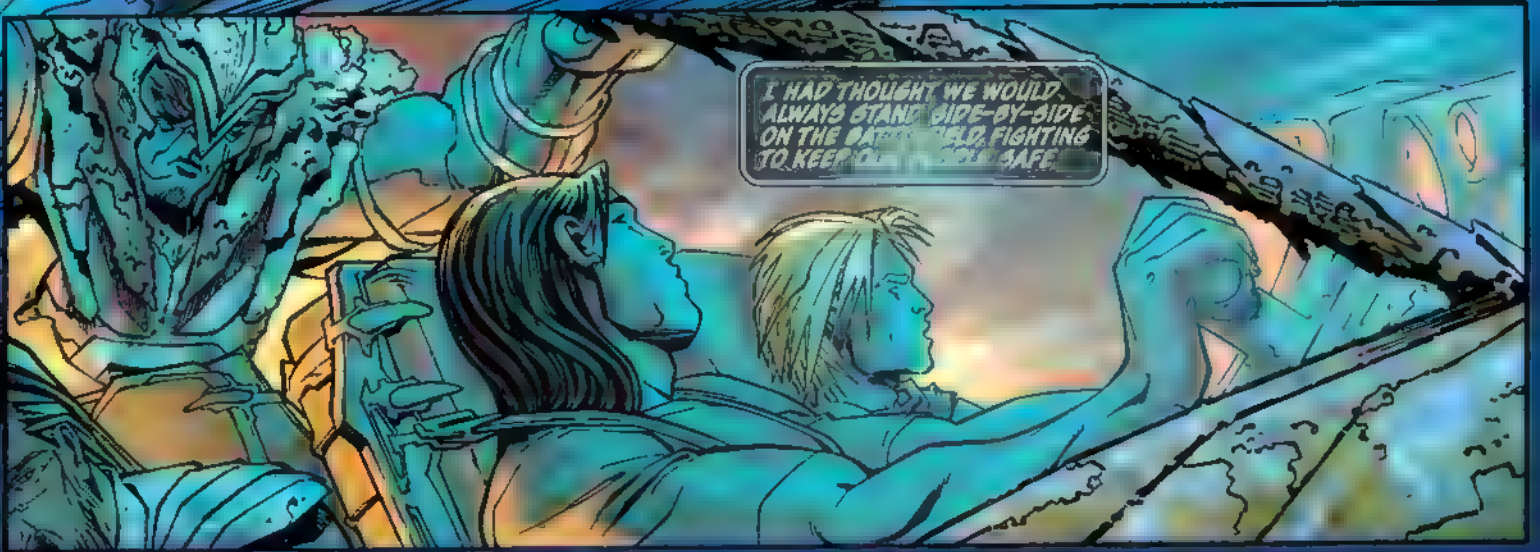
WHEN KIANI WAKES UP, TELL SLEEPYHEAD THAT SHE MISSED A GOOD FIGHT.

I WILL.

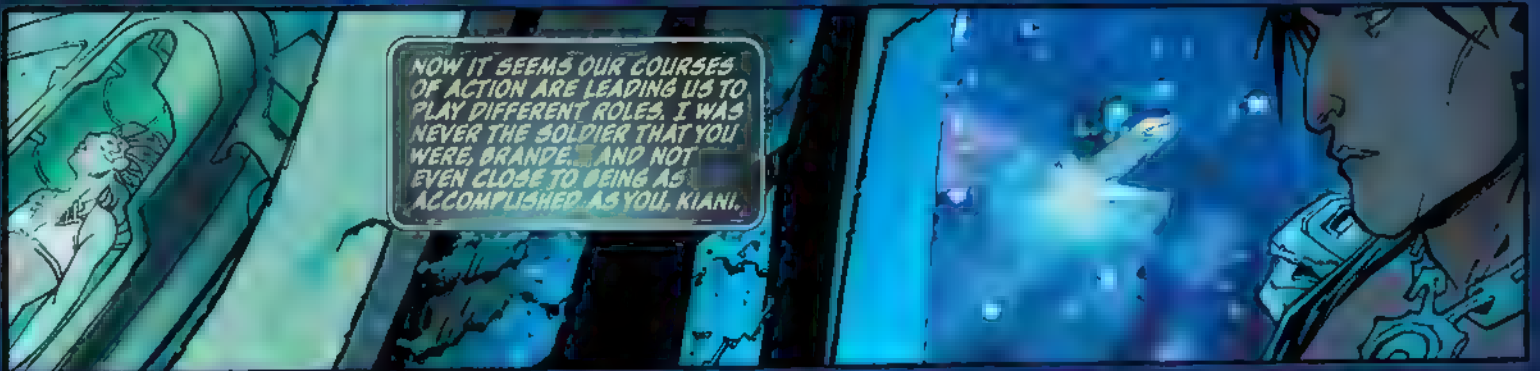
BRANDE... BE CAREFUL.



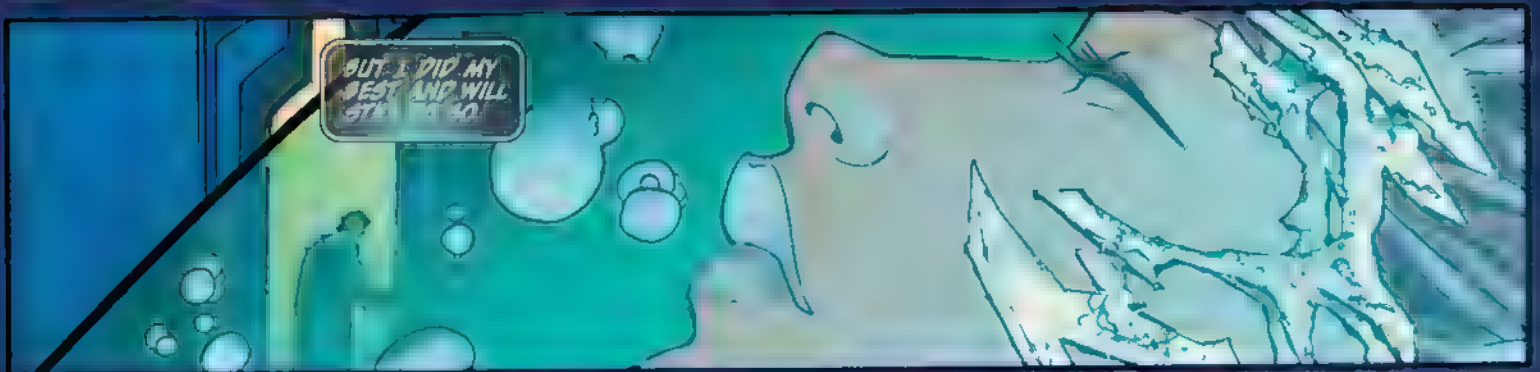
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE
THE THREE OF US TRAINED
TOGETHER. ANNON.



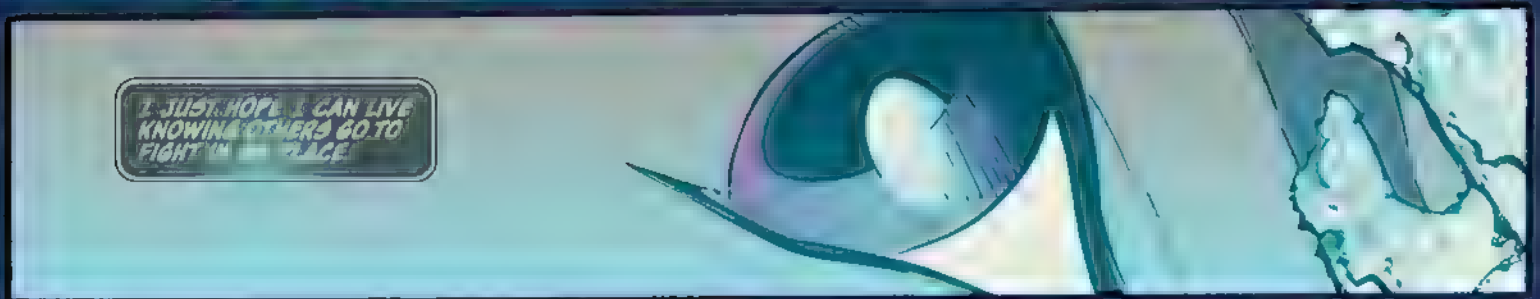
I HAD THOUGHT WE WOULD
ALWAYS STAND SIDE-BY-SIDE
ON THE BATTLEFIELD, FIGHTING
TO KEEP OURSELVES SAFE.



NOW IT SEEMS OUR COURSES
OF ACTION ARE LEADING US TO
PLAY DIFFERENT ROLES. I WAS
NEVER THE SOLDIER THAT YOU
WERE, BRANDE, AND NOT
EVEN CLOSE TO BEING AS
ACCOMPLISHED AS YOU, KIANI.



BUT I DID MY
BEST AND WILL
STAY HERE.



I JUST HOPE I CAN LIVE
KNOWING OTHERS GO TO
FIGHT IN MY PLACE.



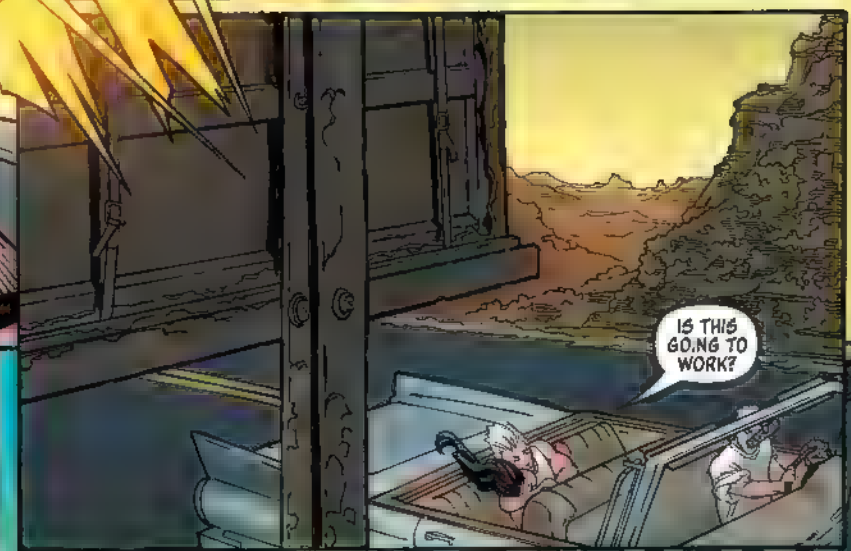
HOW'S SHE DOING?

NOT GOOD. SHE'S TERRIBLY DEHYDRATED. HER SKIN IS DRY AND CRACKING. SHE FEELS BRITTLE. AT LEAST SHE'S BREATHING, BUT SHE IS STILL UNCONSCIOUS.

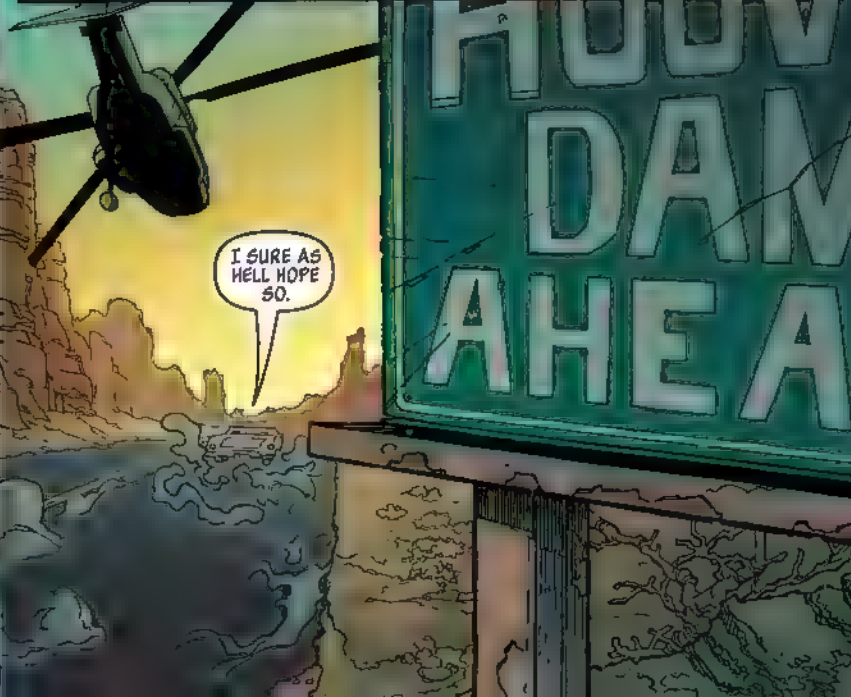


I WISH I WAS UNCONSCIOUS RIGHT ABOUT NOW.

HANG ON!



IS THIS GOING TO WORK?



I SURE AS HELL HOPE SO.

HOOVER
DAM
AHEAD





WHAT IF SHE DROWNS?

SHE CAN'T... CAN SHE?

I DON'T KNOW.

READY. ONE... TWO... THREE!

YOU SEE ANYTHING YET?

NOPE.

NO... YOU?

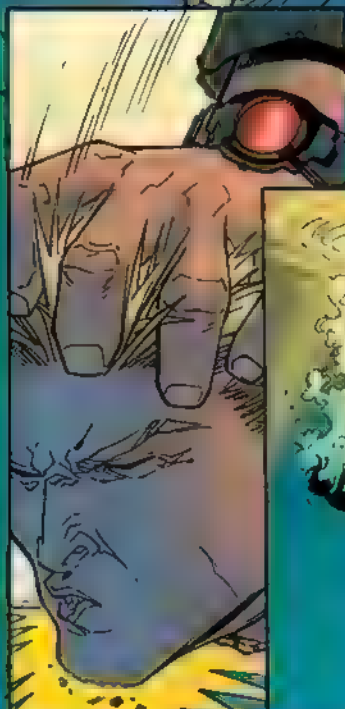
FREEZE!



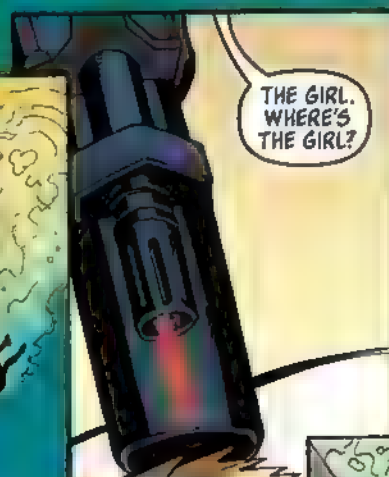
DOWN ON
THE GROUND!
NOW!

WHO? US?

WHERE'S
THE OTHER
ONE?



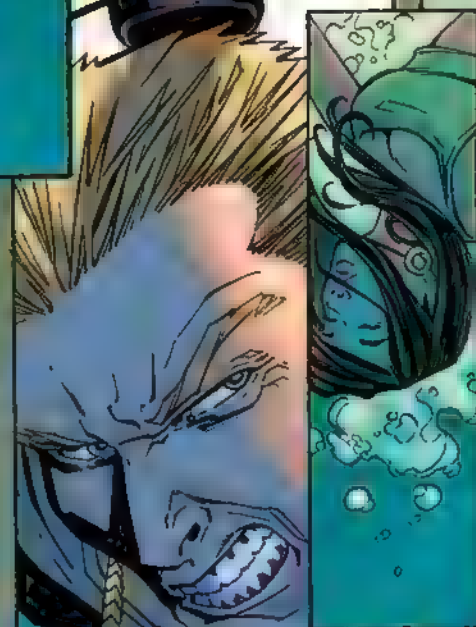
I DON'T
KNOW WHAT
YOU'RE TALKING
ABOUT?



THE GIRL.
WHERE'S
THE GIRL?



LAST
CHANCE.
WHERE...

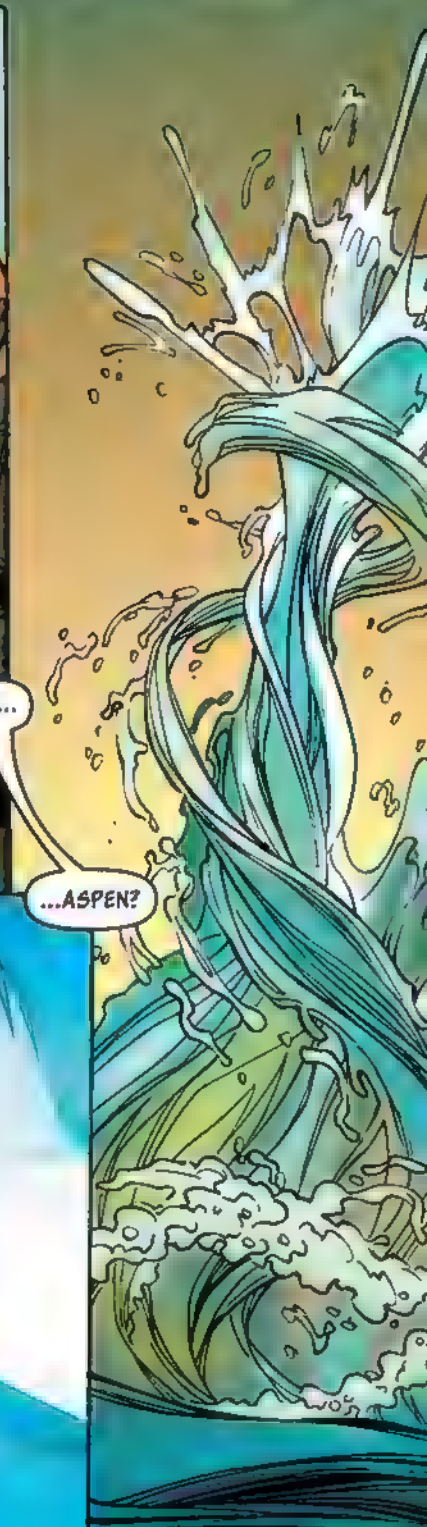


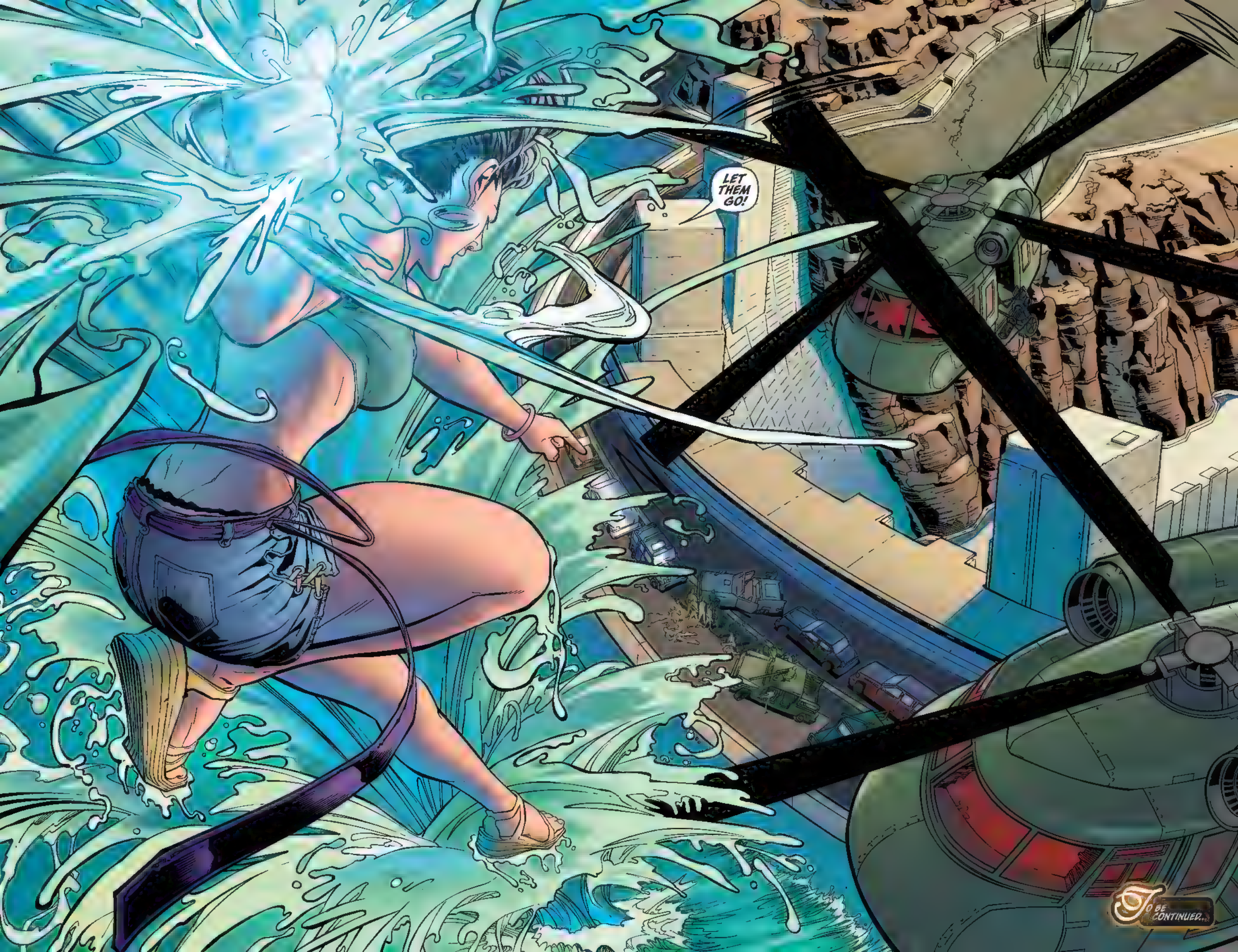
GIRL? HEY, IF
YOU GUYS ARE
LOOKING FOR A LITTLE
RELEASE, THE CHICKEN
RANCH IS ONLY A FEW
MINUTES AWAY. HELL,
I'LL EVEN TREAT.



...IS...

...ASPEN?





LET
THEM
GO!



Vol. 2

#7

OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



TURNBULL BORDER

VOLUME TWO
Issue Seven of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
story

KOI TURNBULL
pencils

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FOR ASPEN:

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"HOW CAN SUCH A SIGHT BE
SO BEAUTIFUL AND AT THE
SAME TIME DISTURBING?"



MY GRANDPA USED TO ASK HIMSELF THAT HE WAS IN THE COAST GUARD FOR OVER TWENTY YEARS, SPENDING MOST OF THAT TIME ON AN ICEBREAKER OFF THE COAST OF ALASKA.

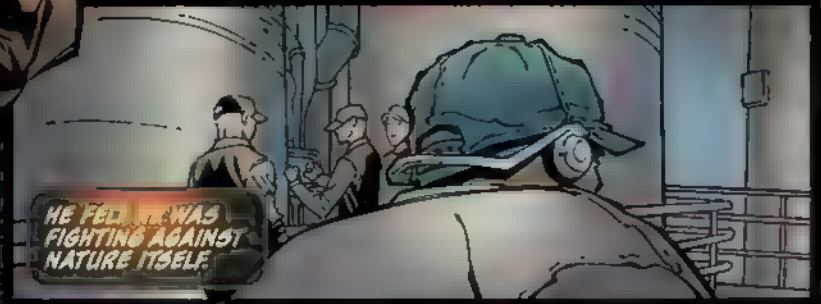


I WAS JUST A KID WHEN HE WOULD TELL ME ABOUT THE ICE AND HOW HE COULD WATCH IT FORM ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER, LISTENING TO IT CRACKLE TO LIFE OVER THE BRISK MORNING BREEZE. IT WAS ALIVE, HE WOULD SAY. IT MOVED, IT BREATHED, IT HAD A PURPOSE.



HE DIDN'T LIKE KNOWING THAT IT WAS HIS JOB TO BREAK IT UP.

"IT WAS AS IF THE WORLD WAS TRYING TO MEND ITSELF, BUT I WAS THERE TO TEAR IT ALL APART AGAIN."

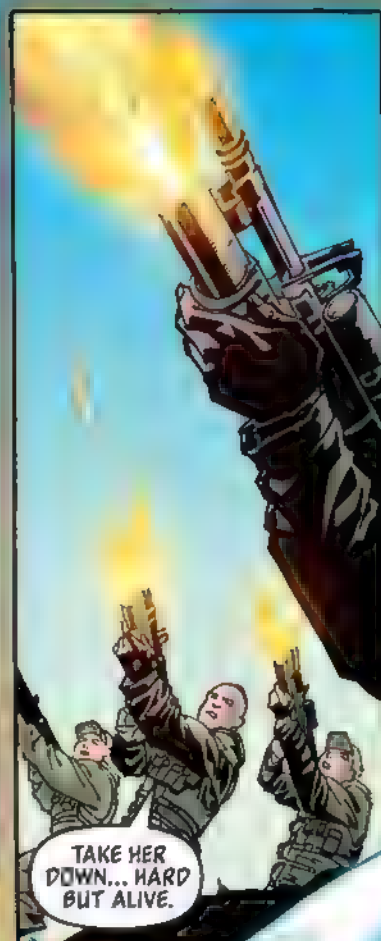


HE FELT HE WAS FIGHTING AGAINST NATURE ITSELF.



BUT WHAT COULD HE DO?

HE WAS A SOLDIER, AND ORDERS WERE ORDERS.



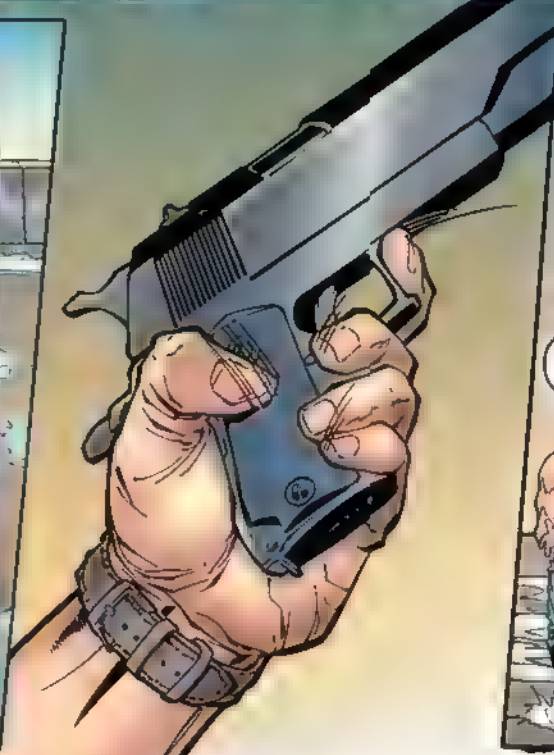
...METAPHORICALLY
SPEAKING OF COURSE.

I THINK
WE'D BETTER
FIND SOMETHING
TO HANG
ON TO.

YOU
THINK?



STAY
DOWN.



YOU
REMEMBER HOW
TO USE ONE OF
THESE?

BLUR
POINT AND
CLICK.

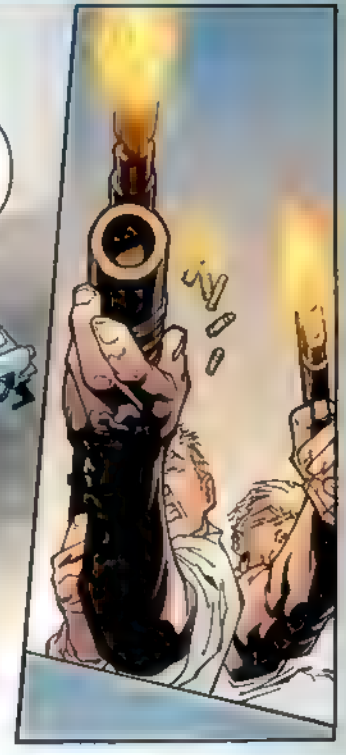


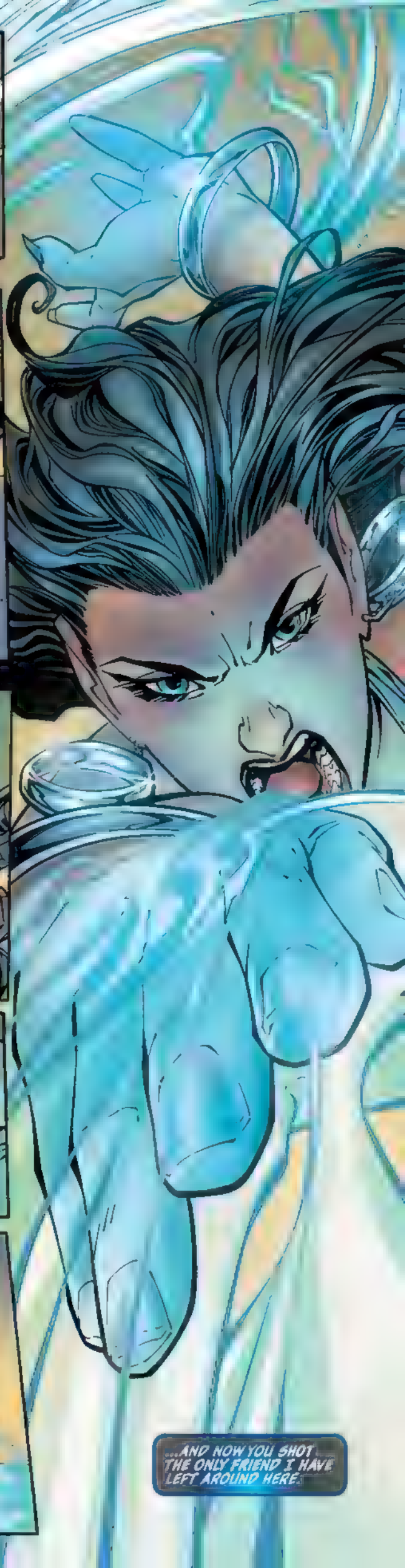
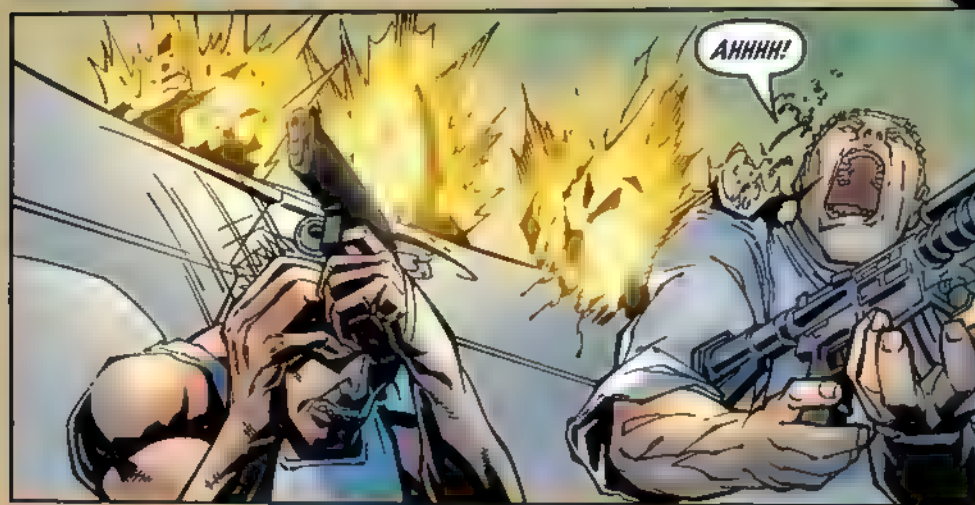
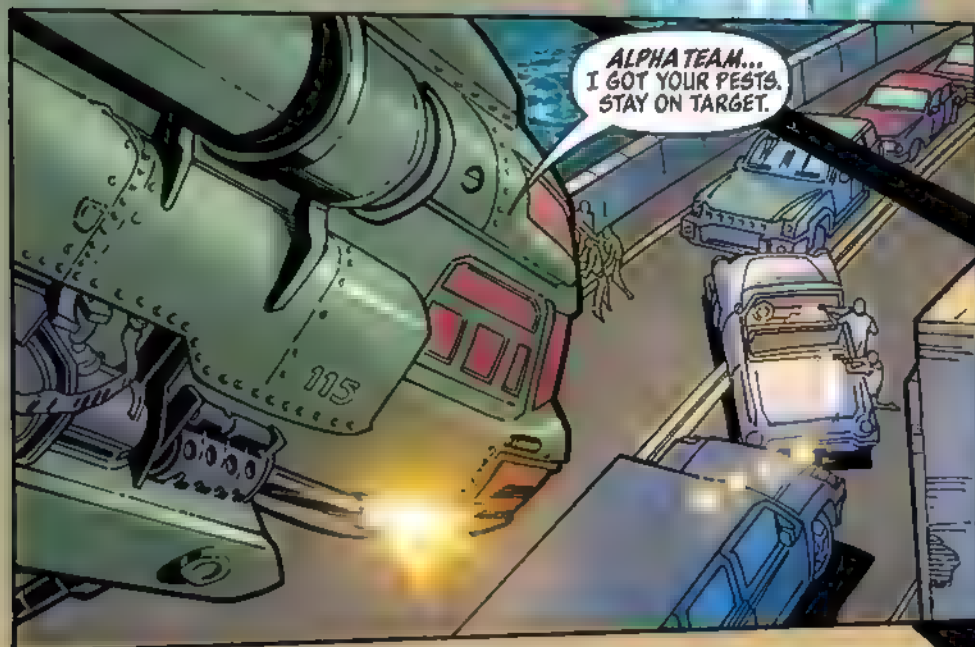
NOT TO
BELABOR THE POINT,
BUT JUST SO WE'RE
CLEAR, WE ARE ABOUT
TO OPEN FIRE AGAINST
THE U.S. MILITARY,
RIGHT?



DON'T WORRY,
CHANCE. IF WE MAKE
IT TO THE COURT
MARTIAL HEARING, JUST
TELL THEM WHO FIRED
FIRST.

RIGHT.



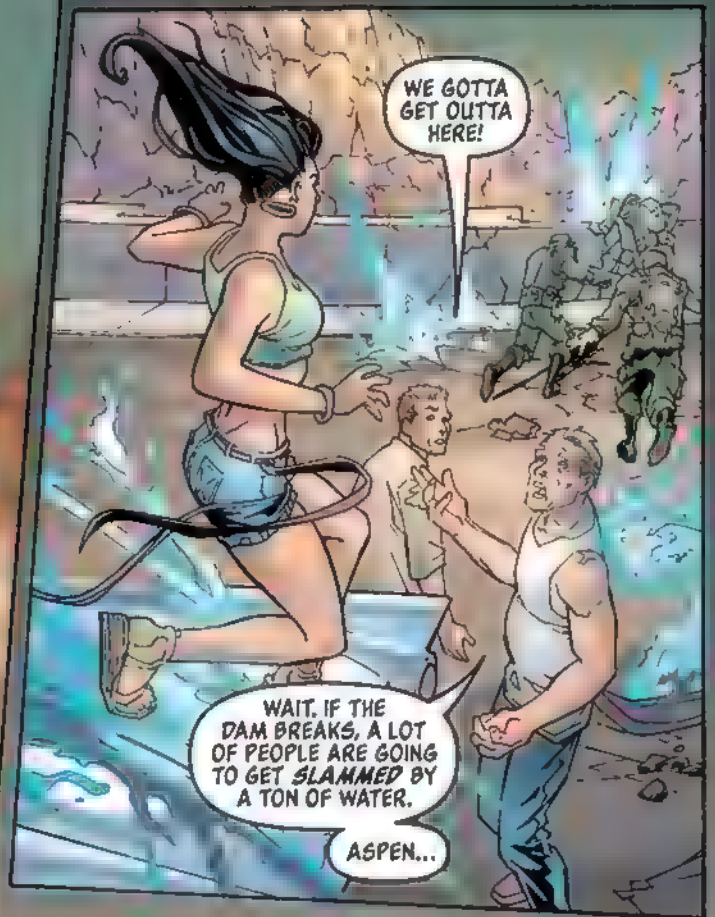


ORDERS OR NO ORDERS...
TIME YOU GOT WHAT'S
COMING TO YOU!

UH-OH. MAYBE I
HAD THAT PART
BACKWARDS.

NOOO!

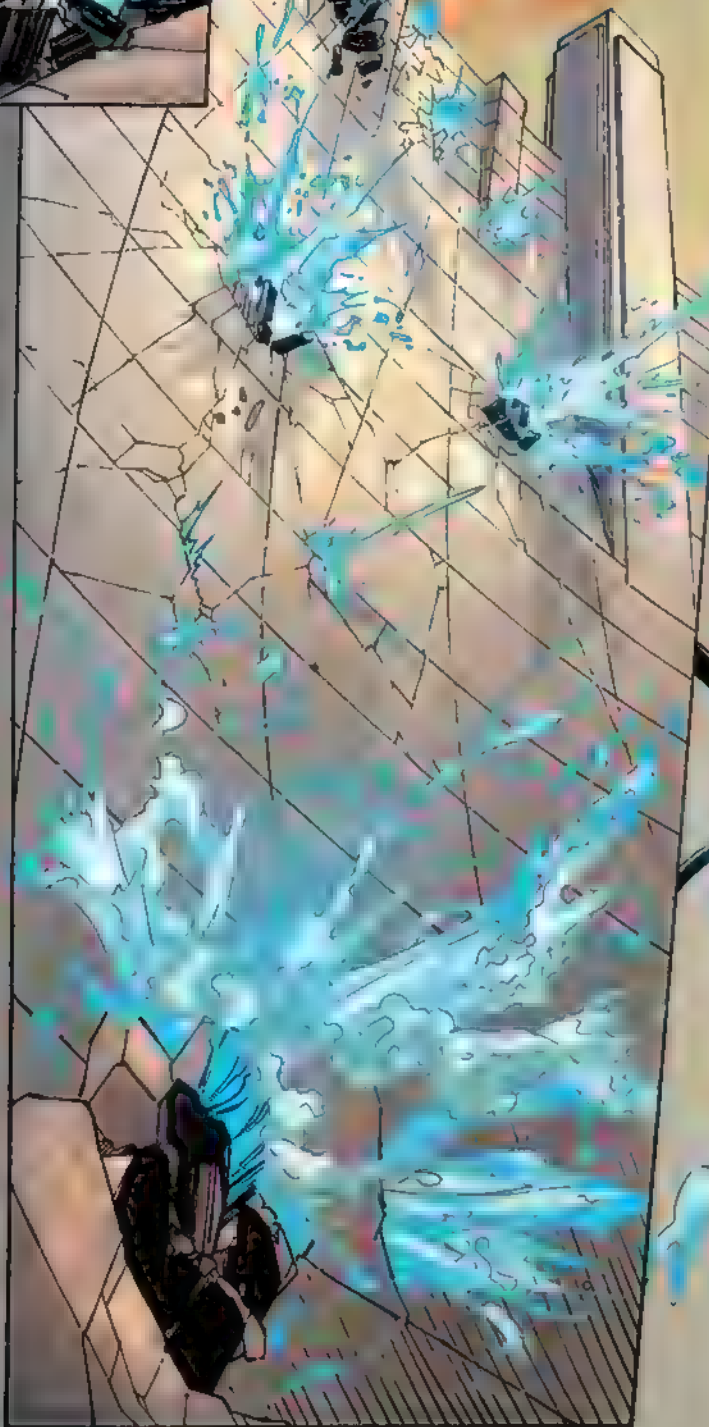




WE GOTTA
GET OUTTA
HERE!

WAIT. IF THE
DAM BREAKS, A LOT
OF PEOPLE ARE GOING
TO GET **SLAMMED** BY
A TON OF WATER.

ASPEN...



I'LL DO
WHAT I
CAN.



I DON'T LIKE REACHING
SO DEEP INTO MY
POWERS LIKE THIS.

IT REMINDS ME OF THE
LAST TIME... AT THE BLUE
SUN, WHEN I PUT AN END
TO KILLIAN AND HIS
MEGALOMANIACAL TENDENCIES.

IT SCARES ME...

...KNOWING JUST
WHAT I AM
CAPABLE OF.



ANYTHING?

NOTHING.
VISIBILITY UP THERE
IS NEAR ZERO. I HAD
TO BRING HER DOWN.
RAIN'S TOO HEAVY.

GREAT. CAN'T
WAIT TO RADIO
THIS ONE IN.

CONTROL, THIS
IS ALPHA TEAM.
STRUCTURAL BREACH
TO THE DAM HAS BEEN
STABILIZED, BUT THE
DAMAGE IS DONE.
THE TARGET IS
GONE.



REPEAT.
THE TARGET
IS GONE.

NO, NO... I SEE YOUR POINT, COUNCILMAN. BUT OUR PEOPLE DEMAND THAT WE RESPOND.

BUT WAR?

WE'VE BEEN AT THIS ALL MORNING, AND NOBODY IS SAYING ANYTHING NEW. IT'S JUST EMPTY RHETORIC. THEY MUST THINK WE DEBATE THE ISSUE THROUGH THE MATTER OF OURSELVES.

THIS WAS AN ISOLATED ATTACK BY A SMALL REPRESENTATION OF THE HUMAN POPULATION. WAR WOULD EXPOSE US TO THE ENTIRE WORLD ABOVE. WE CANNOT AFFORD TO BECOME HUMANITY'S GREAT THREAT.

THIS ISN'T A MANNER OF EITHER CHOOSING TO GO TO WAR OR APPEARING DISCONNECTED FROM OUR PEOPLE'S WISHES. THE TWO OPTIONS ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, IF I MAY FINISH MY THOUGHT...

...SABA IS GONE, AND THERE IS NO REASON TO RECLAIM THE CITY THROUGH DIRECT CONFLICT. BUT WE CAN DO SOMETHING TO PUT THE PEOPLE'S MINDS AT EASE REGARDING THIS LATEST ATTACK SO CLOSE TO OUR HOME.

AND WHAT WOULD THAT BE?

DISABLE THE HYDROPORT SYSTEM. IT'S THE REASON THE HUMANS WERE ABLE TO REACH US IN THE FIRST PLACE. SEVER THE LINK AND WE SEVER THE TRAIL FROM SABA TO US.

COUNCILMAN ALDEN, THE HYDROPORT SYSTEM ALLOWED US TO RESCUE THALASSAR AND THE OTHERS. IT'S THE ONLY THING CONNECTING OUR CITIES IN TIMES OF NEED.

TRUE, BUT WE NEED TO NEUTRALIZE THE IMMEDIATE THREAT AND WORRY LATER ABOUT HYPOTHETICAL ONES.

I JUST DON'T SEE HOW THIS WILL NEUTRALIZE THE THREAT. THIS HUMAN FORCE WILL STILL BE IN SABA AND STILL BE HUNTING AFTER US.

WE WILL BE BEYOND THEIR REACH. AND THAT WILL BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE PEOPLE.

SIPHON, THE MASSES DO NOT WANT WAR. THEY WANT PROTECTION. THEY WANT SAFETY, AND THAT'S WHAT WE WILL PROVIDE.

BEING ON THE COUNCIL'S SECURITY
FORCE IS ABOUT AS FAR FROM
CIVILIAN AS YOU CAN GET. STILL,
SOMEHOW, I FEEL CONNECTED TO
THE PEOPLE. EVEN THOUGH...
WEARING THIS... I SUDDENLY
FIND MYSELF...

I KNOW THEIR EYES ARE ALL
FOCUSED ON ME. I CAN HEAR THE
DOUBT IN THEIR WHISPERS. WHAT
WOULD THEY SAY IF THEY KNEW
THAT NO ONE COULD DOUBT
ABOUT MY... I DO?

EXCEPT FOR
MAYBE MY
FATHER...

LIFE WAS EASIER AS A SOLDIER.
I JUST HAD TO REMEMBER THE
TRAINING WHEN THE TIME CAME
ON THE BATTLEFIELD. MOVE AND
COUNTERMOVE. ALWAYS HAVE ANSWERS.

BUT I HAVE NO
ANSWERS FOR
MY NEW DUTY.

THERE IS NO
TRAINING FOR
THIS...

NICE
PAJAMAS.

BRANDE!
THALASSAR!

CONGRATULATIONS,
COUNCILMAN SIPHON.
MAYBE SOME NEW
BLOOD WILL BE ABLE
TO GET THE COUNCIL
INTO GEAR.

THANKS. I
HOPE SO.

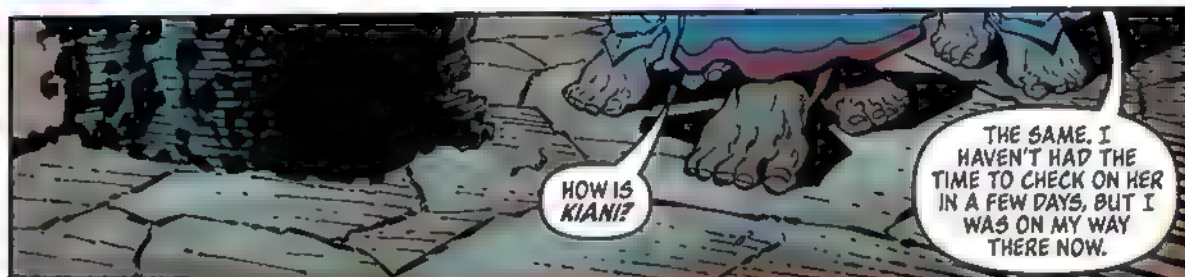
SO DO I BOW?
OR IS THERE SOME
RING I'M SUPPOSED
TO KISS?

SHUT UP.



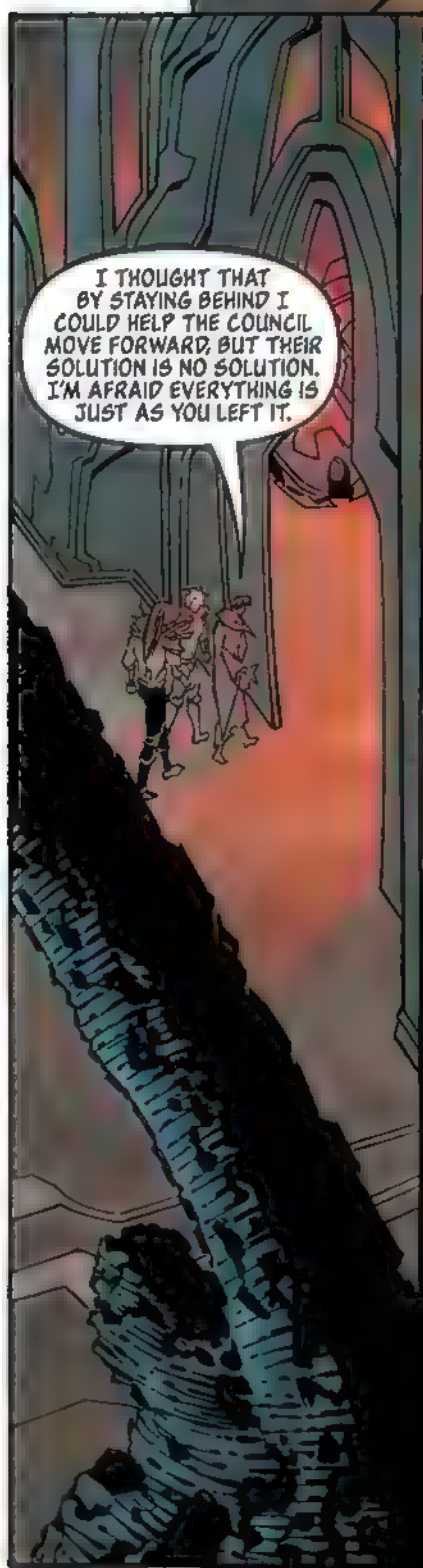
HOW DID
YOUR MISSION
GO?

NOT ONE OF OUR
BRIGHTER MOMENTS.
BIRANHA GOT AWAY AND
CANNON IS GONE UNTIL HE CAN
TAKE CARE OF THAT MONKEY ON HIS
BACK. ON THE PLUS SIDE THOUGH,
CANNON DID CLOCK *KREEG* A
COUPLE OF TIMES.



HOW IS
KIANI?

THE SAME. I
HAVEN'T HAD THE
TIME TO CHECK ON HER
IN A FEW DAYS, BUT I
WAS ON MY WAY
THERE NOW.



I THOUGHT THAT
BY STAYING BEHIND I
COULD HELP THE COUNCIL
MOVE FORWARD, BUT THEIR
SOLUTION IS NO SOLUTION.
I'M AFRAID EVERYTHING IS
JUST AS YOU LEFT IT.

APPARENTLY NOT
EVERYTHING.

WHERE'S
KIANI?

FROM AS FAR BACK AS I CAN REMEMBER, CASQUE TOLD ME ABOUT MY UNIQUE CONNECTION WITH THE WATER. I USED TO THINK IT WAS JUST A BIT OF NOSTALGIA, A BIT OF PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE, SOMETHING WE SHARED WITH ALL THE STUDENTS.

BUT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO ME, IT ALL MAKES SENSE.

HE TOLD ME I WAS SPECIAL.

HE TOLD ME I WAS DIFFERENT.

AND CASQUE WAS RIGHT.

WHY WOULD SHE BE IN HERE?

IF YOU WERE KIANI, WHERE WOULD YOU GO AFTER GETTING BLASTED BY THE HUMANS?

GOOD POINT. KIANI?



HEY
BOYS.

I AM

...FORECASTED CLEAR SKIES, BUT A SUDDEN FORMATION OF STORM CLOUDS BROUGHT RAIN ALONG THE ENTIRE HIGH DESERT... THE HEAVY RAINS CAUSED MAJOR FLOODING IN AREAS SOUTH OF THE HOOVER DAM, BUT SO FAR NO SERIOUS INJURIES OR DAMAGE HAVE BEEN REPORTED.

THANKS TO YOU, IT SOUNDS LIKE THE ONLY THING INJURED WAS THE CREDIBILITY OF A FEW METEOROLOGISTS.

THAT AND CHANCE'S SHOULDER.

HE'LL BE OKAY. HE'S A GOOD GUY.

GOOD ENOUGH THAT HE DIDN'T DESERVE TO GET SHOT BECAUSE OF ME.

YOU'RE GONNA BLAME YOURSELF FOR THAT?

I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE.

IT WAS YOUR FAULT, HUH? JUST LIKE IT WAS YOUR FAULT FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO ME.

WELL, WASN'T IT? OR IS IT STANDARD POLICY FOR THE NAVY TO KIDNAP AND DRUG THEIR RETIRED OFFICERS?

NO, I SUPPOSE IT'S NOT.

LOOK, ASPEN... I CANNOT IMAGINE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. HELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S BEEN LIKE FOR YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR YEARS.

I TRIED TO HELP YOU, BUT I REALLY DIDN'T KNOW HOW. I MEAN, WHO WAS I TO GIVE SOMEONE LIKE YOU ADVICE?

MY FATHER... THAT'S WHO.



THAT'S ALL I
EVER WANTED TO BE
TO YOU. BUT I NEVER
FELT LIKE I FIT THE
ROLE.

YOU DID MORE THAN
YOU KNOW. YOU NEVER
DICTATED TO ME. YOU ALWAYS
GAVE ME THE FREEDOM TO
MAKE UP MY OWN MIND.

WELL...
EXCEPT FOR BRAD
WILLISON.

WHO?

HE WAS MY PROM
DATE SENIOR YEAR. YOU
THOUGHT HE WASN'T A
GENTLEMAN.

AND...



YOU WERE
RIGHT. BUT I SET
HIM STRAIGHT.

I'M SURE
YOU DID.



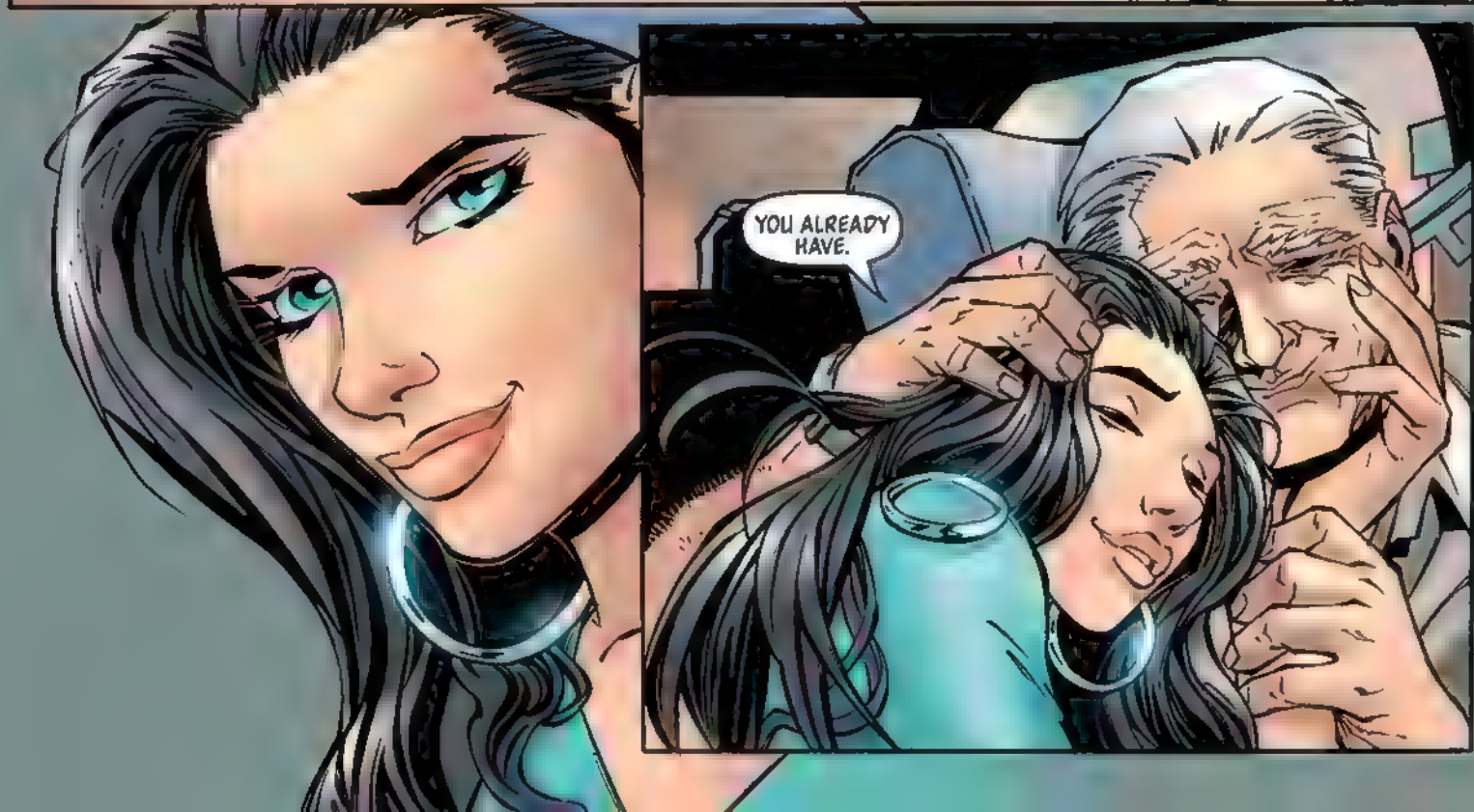
I GUESS I KNEW MY
CAREER WOULD KEEP ME
AWAY MOST OF THE TIME, SO
MAKING ALL YOUR DECISIONS FOR YOU
WASN'T AN OPTION. BESIDES, I FIGURED
IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU TO LEARN
HOW TO MAKE THEM FOR YOURSELF.
YOU KNOW, TEACH A PERSON TO
FISH... BLAH, BLAH, BLAH.

IT LOOKS LIKE IT
PAID OFF BECAUSE
YOU'VE BECOME QUITE A
WOMAN, ASPEN. BUT THAT
ISN'T TO SAY THAT I
WOULDN'T HELP YOU IN
ANY WAY THAT I
COULD.

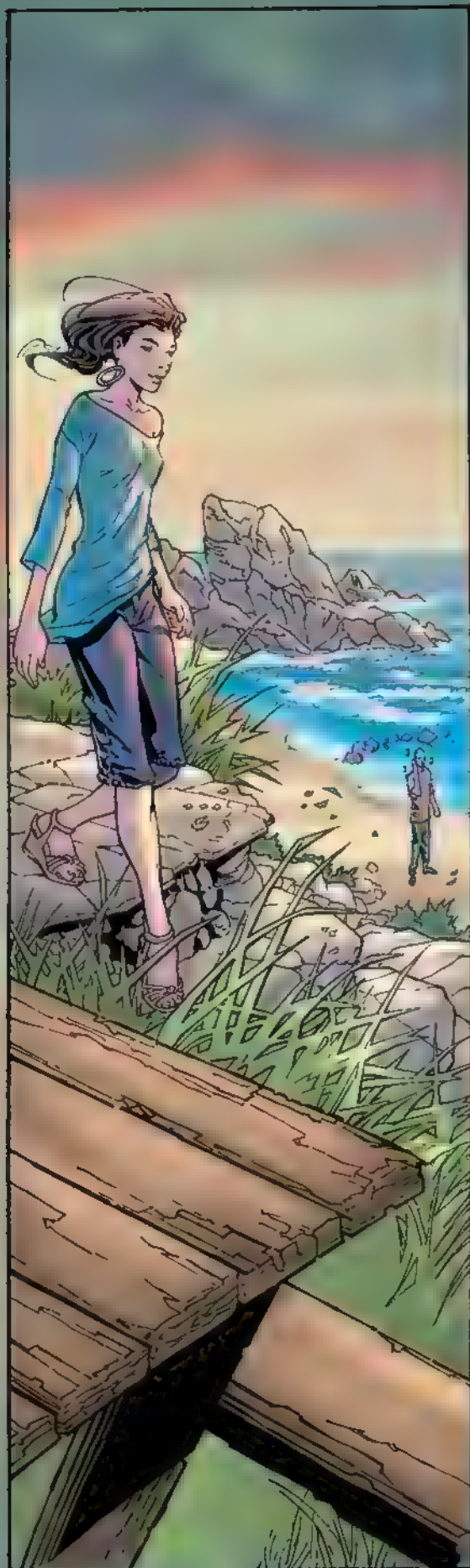
I KNOW.



SO... HOW
CAN I HELP?



YOU ALREADY
HAVE.



THERE YOU ARE.

YEAH. MY ASS WAS GETTING SPLINTERS FROM THE PICNIC TABLE.

SORRY IF WE MONOPOLIZED THE CAR.

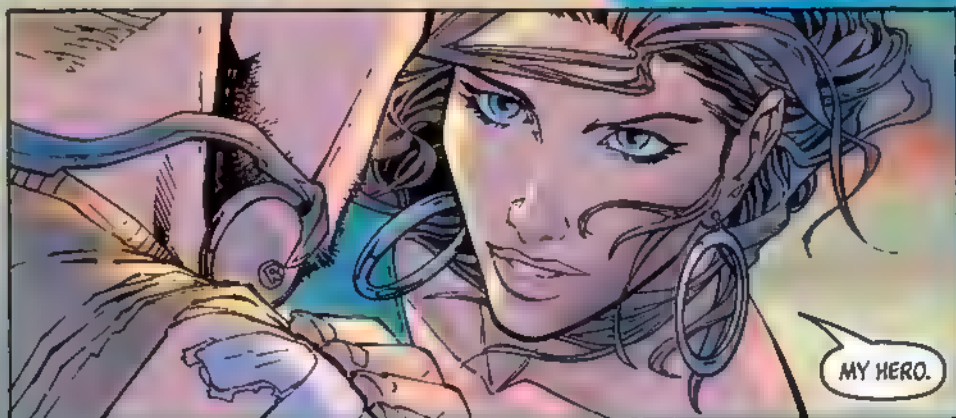
IT'S MY OWN FAULT. I SHOULD HAVE STOLEN US A SEDAN. HOW'S YOUR DAD DOING?

HE'S FINE. WE WERE WONDERING HOW YOU WERE DOING.

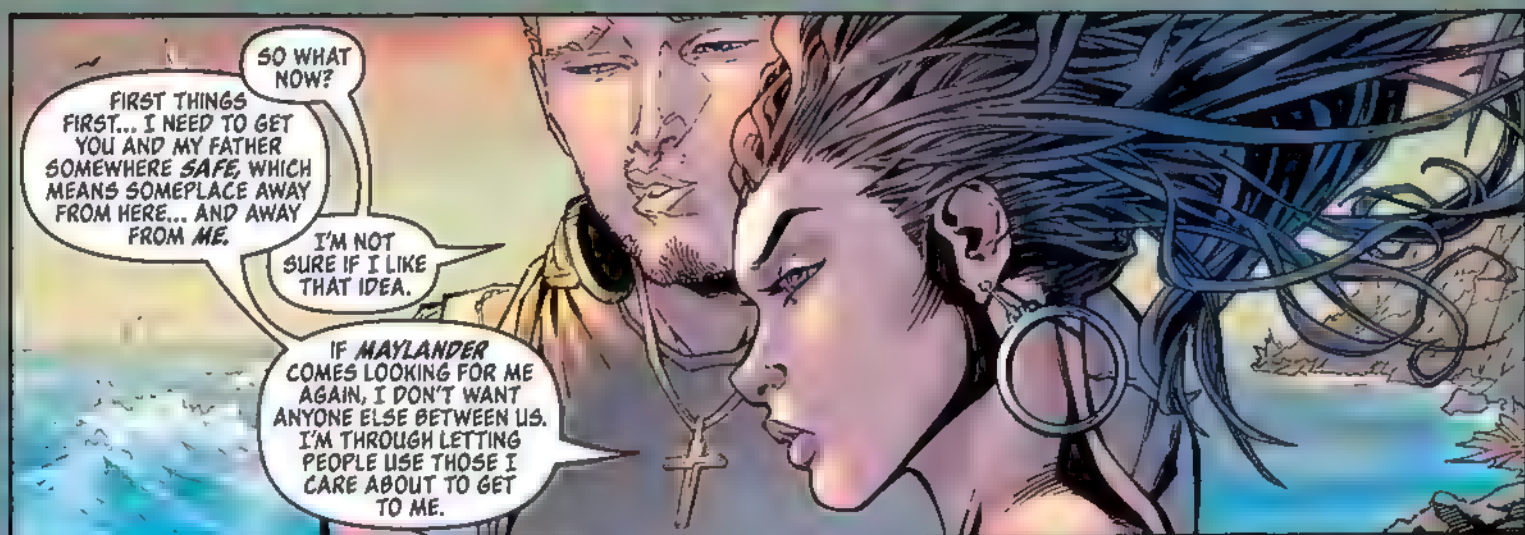
IT'S NOTHING. I CUT MYSELF WORSE WHEN I SHAVE.

GUESS THIS WILL TEACH YOU TO SHOW OFF.

ABSOLUTELY. IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU, NEXT TIME I'LL JUST GIVE FLOWERS. THIS WHOLE TAKING A BULLET THING IS OVERRATED.



MY HERO.



SO WHAT NOW?

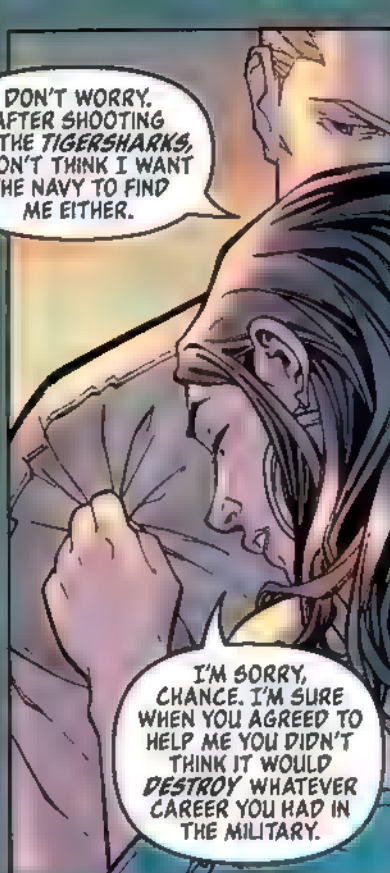
FIRST THINGS FIRST... I NEED TO GET YOU AND MY FATHER SOMEWHERE **SAFE**, WHICH MEANS SOMEPLACE AWAY FROM HERE... AND AWAY FROM **ME**.

I'M NOT SURE IF I LIKE THAT IDEA.

IF **MAYLANDER** COMES LOOKING FOR ME AGAIN, I DON'T WANT ANYONE ELSE BETWEEN US. I'M THROUGH LETTING PEOPLE USE THOSE I CARE ABOUT TO GET TO ME.



I KNOW I AM ASKING A LOT, BUT I NEED SOMEONE I CAN *TRUST* TO KEEP AN EYE ON MY FATHER.



DON'T WORRY. AFTER SHOOTING AT THE *TIGERSHARKS*, I DON'T THINK I WANT THE NAVY TO FIND ME EITHER.

I'M SORRY, CHANCE. I'M SURE WHEN YOU AGREED TO HELP ME YOU DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD *DESTROY* WHATEVER CAREER YOU HAD IN THE MILITARY.



ASPEN, I QUIT THAT LIFE A LONG TIME AGO. THE *ONLY* REASON I CAME BACK WAS SO THAT I COULD FIND *YOU* AGAIN.

IS THAT RIGHT?

YEAH. SO GO AHEAD AND FLATTER YOURSELF.





UH-OH. GET BEHIND ME.

YOU SERIOUS?

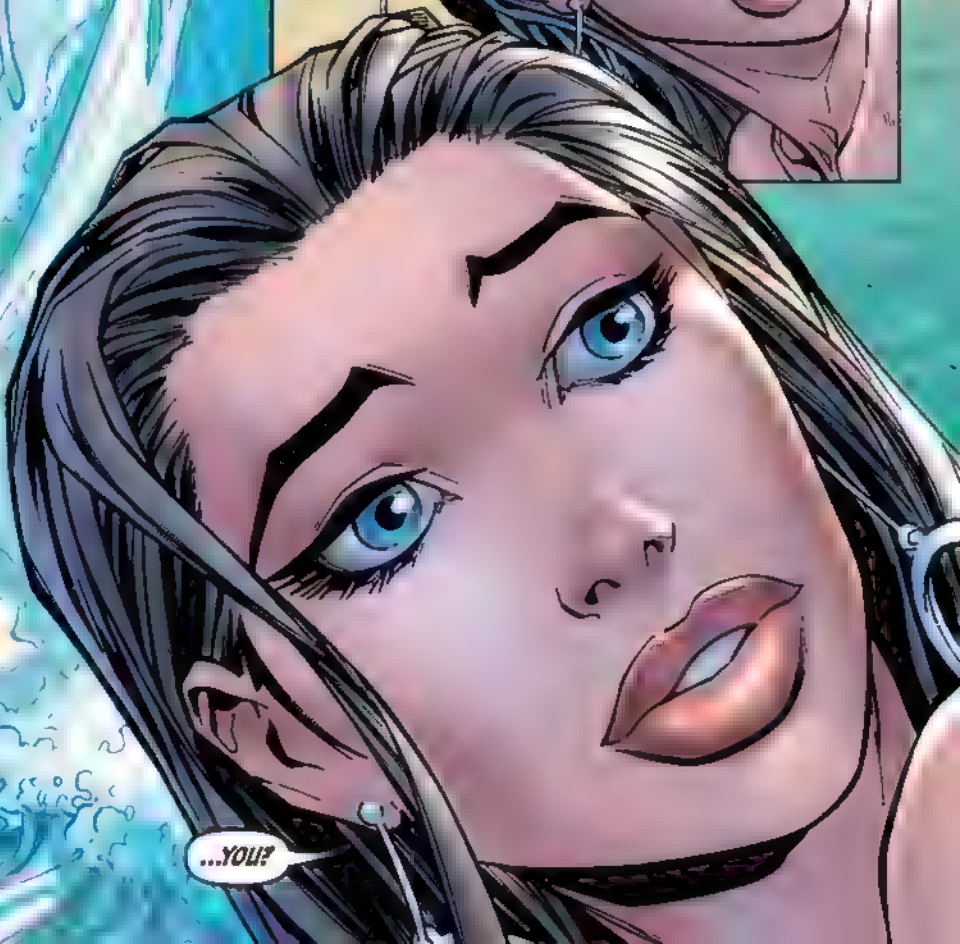
SORRY, REFLEX.

IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MAYLANDER'S GOONS.



NO... I THINK IT'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO CAN'T TAKE A HINT.

RAHGER! LEAVE ME ALONE! I HAVE NOTHING TO SAY TO...



...YOU?



ASPEN
Vol. 2

#8
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COVER A

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MY LIFE IS RATHER...
COMPLEX.

IT MAY SOUND A BIT NARCISSISTIC,
BUT LET'S FACE IT, MY NUCLEAR
FAMILY IS MORE LIKE A NUCLEAR
BLAST. IT'S ALL OVER THE PLACE.
MY ACTUAL FATHER IS PART OF A
RACE OF ANCIENT BEINGS CALLED
THE BLACK. THE LAST TIME I SAW
HIM HE WAS IN TRUE FORM,
BROODING LIKE A CHILDISH TYRANT.

MY SECOND FATHER LIVED WITH
MY MOTHER IN THE WORLD OF THE
BLUE, BUT THEY WERE BOTH KILLED..
MURDERED BY KILLIAN AS HE TRIED
TO KIDNAP ME. AND MY ADOPTIVE
FATHER, CAPTAIN MATTHEWS GAVE
ME MY ONLY YEARS OF NORMALCY
IN THE SUBURBS OF SAN DIEGO.

AND THEN OF
COURSE THERE IS MY
GUARDIAN ANGEL..

...MY BROTHER.



YOUR BROTHER?!?
THAT'S YOUR BROTHER?

IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME,
BUT YES.

YES...
TOO LONG...
ASPEN.

HI, FINN.

DON'T GET ME
WRONG, I'M ALL
FOR THESE TEARFUL
REUNIONS, BUT HOW
CAN YOU TELL? HE
DOESN'T LOOK
ANYTHING LIKE
YOU?

I KNOW HIM,
CHANCE. THIS IS MY
BROTHER. HE GOT LOST ALONG
WITH EVERYTHING ELSE WHEN I
HAD MY SPELL OF AMNESIA
ABOARD THE **PARADISE**, BUT FINN
WAS STILL THERE. JUST LIKE WHEN
I FIRST DISCOVERED THE TRUTH
ABOUT MYSELF-- HE WAS
THERE, LOOKING OUT
FOR ME.

HE'S **ALWAYS**
BEEN LOOKING OUT
FOR ME.

AND THE
REASON HE LOOKS
DIFFERENT IS BECAUSE
OF WHAT HAPPENED
WHEN OUR PARENTS
WERE KILLED.



RIGHT...

THE BEAM... IT CHANGED ME SOMEHOW. I THOUGHT I DIED... BUT... I DIDN'T. I JUST... COULDN'T RETURN BACK TO NORMAL. IT TOOK ME... A LONG TIME... EVEN TO... BE ABLE TO TAKE THIS... FORM.

WHEN I SAW... YOU... GET TAKEN BY THE BLACK... I WAS... SO WORRIED... ASPEN. BUT... I KNEW YOU'D BE ABLE TO TAKE... CARE OF... YOURSELF.

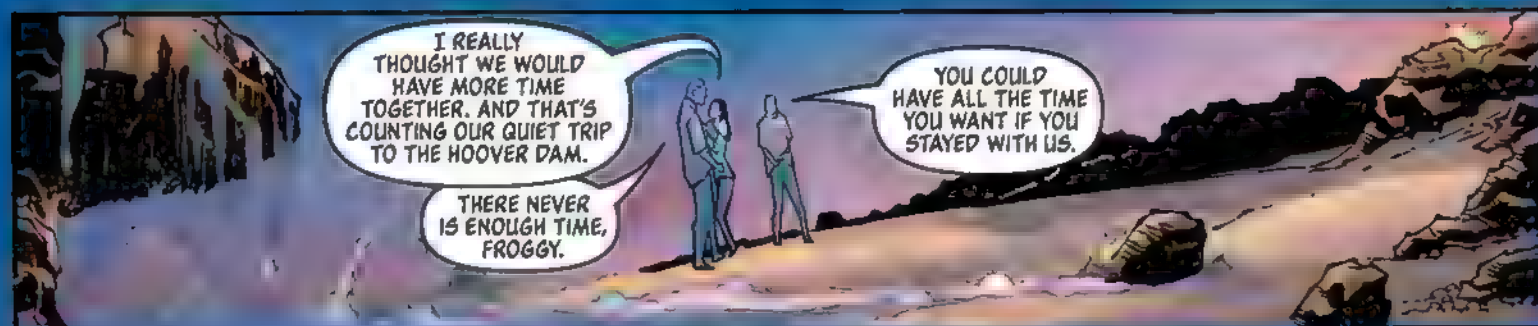
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME WHO YOU WERE BEFORE? YOU JUST GAVE ME THE LONG SILENT STARE LIKE SOME KIND OF AMPHIBIOUS STALKER.

JUST AS IT... TOOK A WHILE FOR ME... TO FIND MY... FORM. IT... TOOK ME UNTIL NOW... TO FIND... MY VOICE. AS... YOU CAN SEE IT IS STILL... DIFFICULT FOR... ME.

THEN SAVE YOUR STRENGTH, FINN. BUT ANSWER ME ONE QUESTION.

CAN YOU TAKE ME TO THE CITY CALLED SABA?





I REALLY THOUGHT WE WOULD HAVE MORE TIME TOGETHER. AND THAT'S COUNTING OUR QUIET TRIP TO THE HOOVER DAM.

THERE NEVER IS ENOUGH TIME, FROGGY.

YOU COULD HAVE ALL THE TIME YOU WANT IF YOU STAYED WITH US.



I TOLD HIM TO ORDER YOU NOT TO GO.

IT WOULDN'T HAVE WORKED. IT NEVER DID.



AND IF I ASKED YOU NOT TO GO?

I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING.

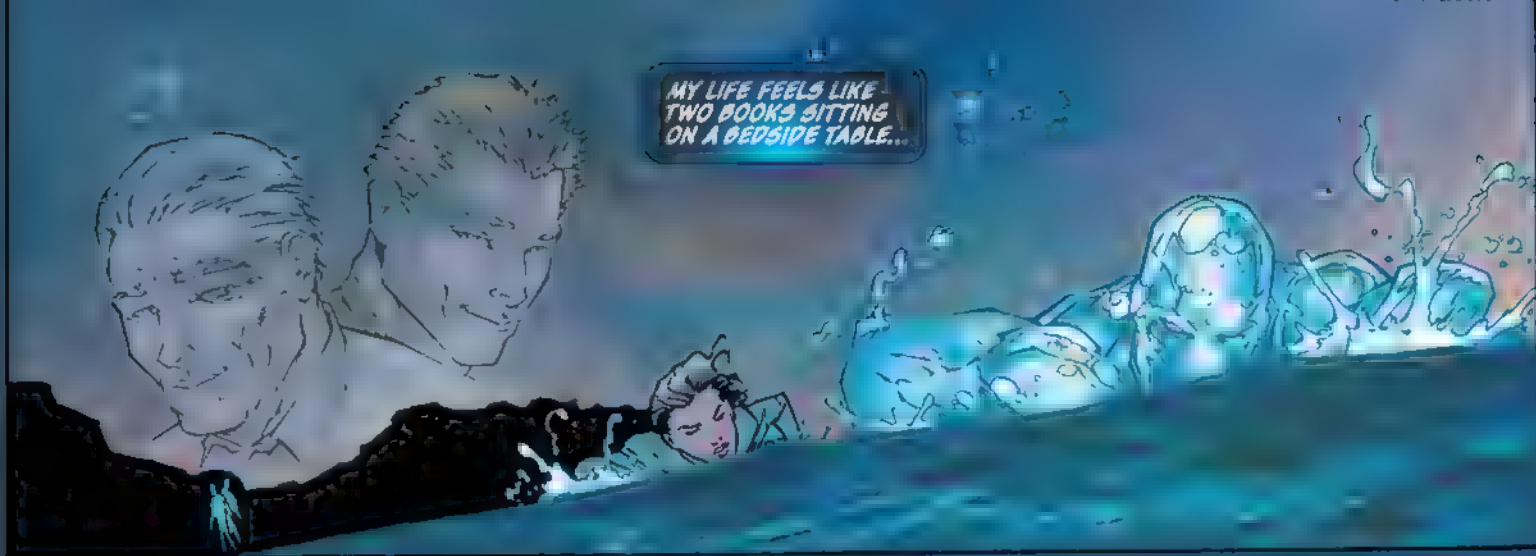
WHY?

WE BOTH KNOW WHY, CHANCE-- BECAUSE I CAN.



I GUESS. BUT I STILL DON'T HAVE TO LIKE IT.

I KNOW. ME NEITHER.



MY LIFE FEELS LIKE
TWO BOOKS SITTING
ON A BEDSIDE TABLE...

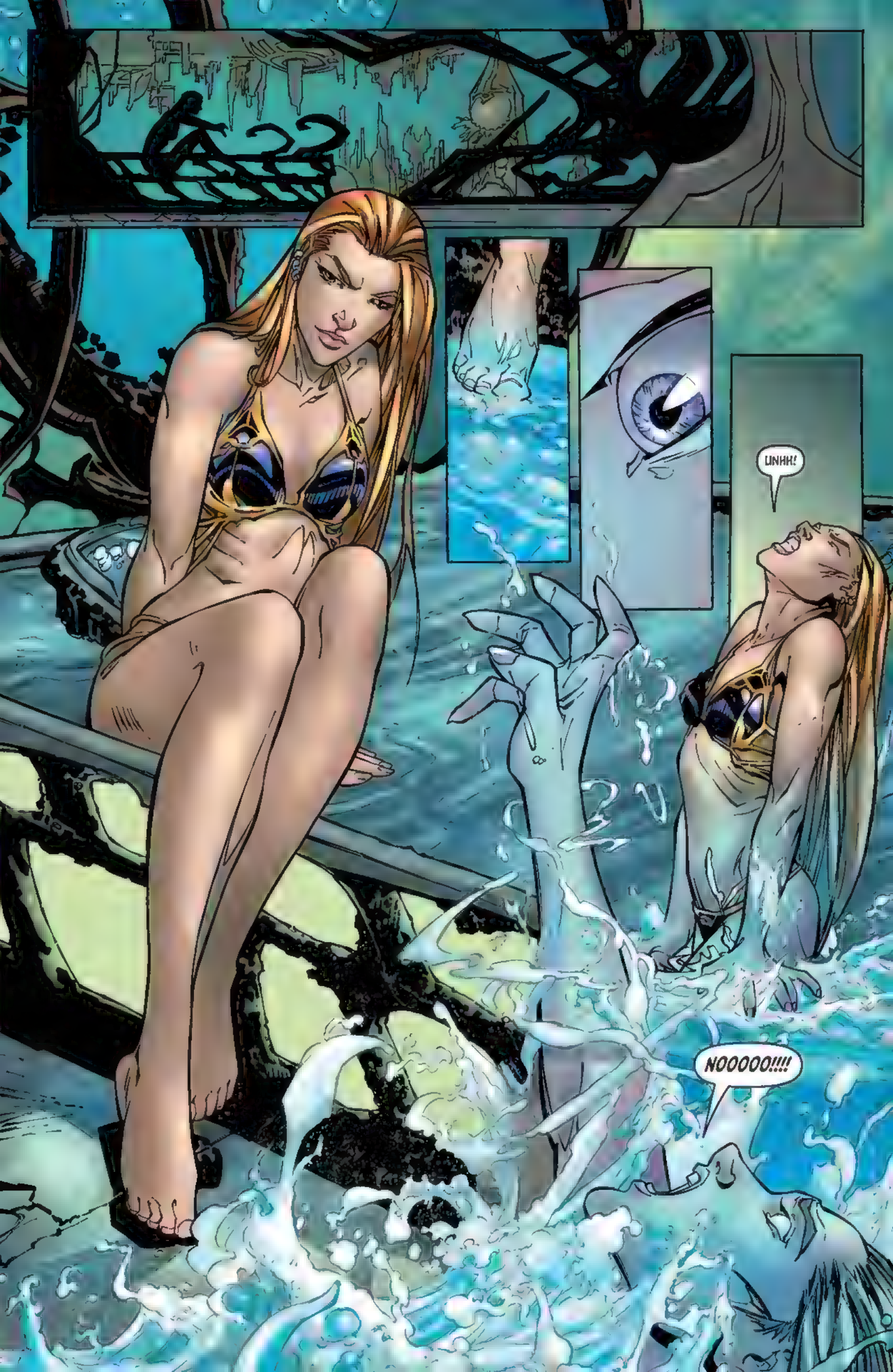
...EACH ONE TELLING
QUITE A DIFFERENT TALE.

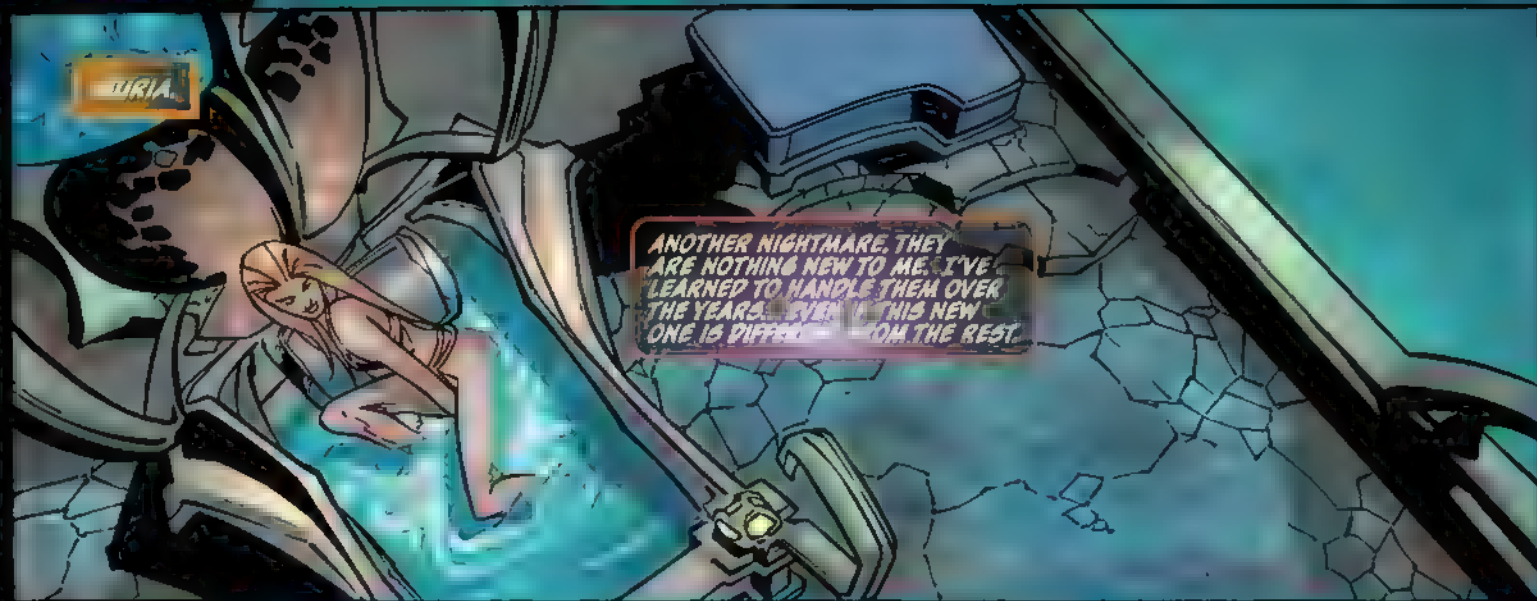
I DO MY BEST TO KEEP
UP WITH BOTH, BUT THE
BIGGEST PROBLEM IS THAT
I CANNOT PICK ONE UP...



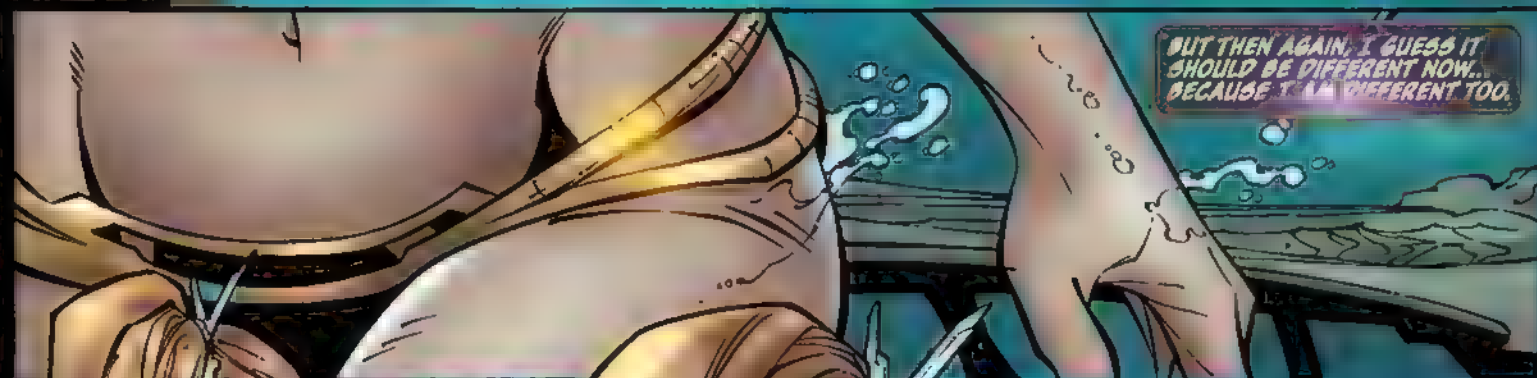
...WITHOUT PUTTING
THE OTHER ONE ASIDE.







ANOTHER NIGHTMARE, THEY ARE NOTHING NEW TO ME. I'VE LEARNED TO HANDLE THEM OVER THE YEARS. EVEN THIS NEW ONE IS DIFFERENT FROM THE REST.



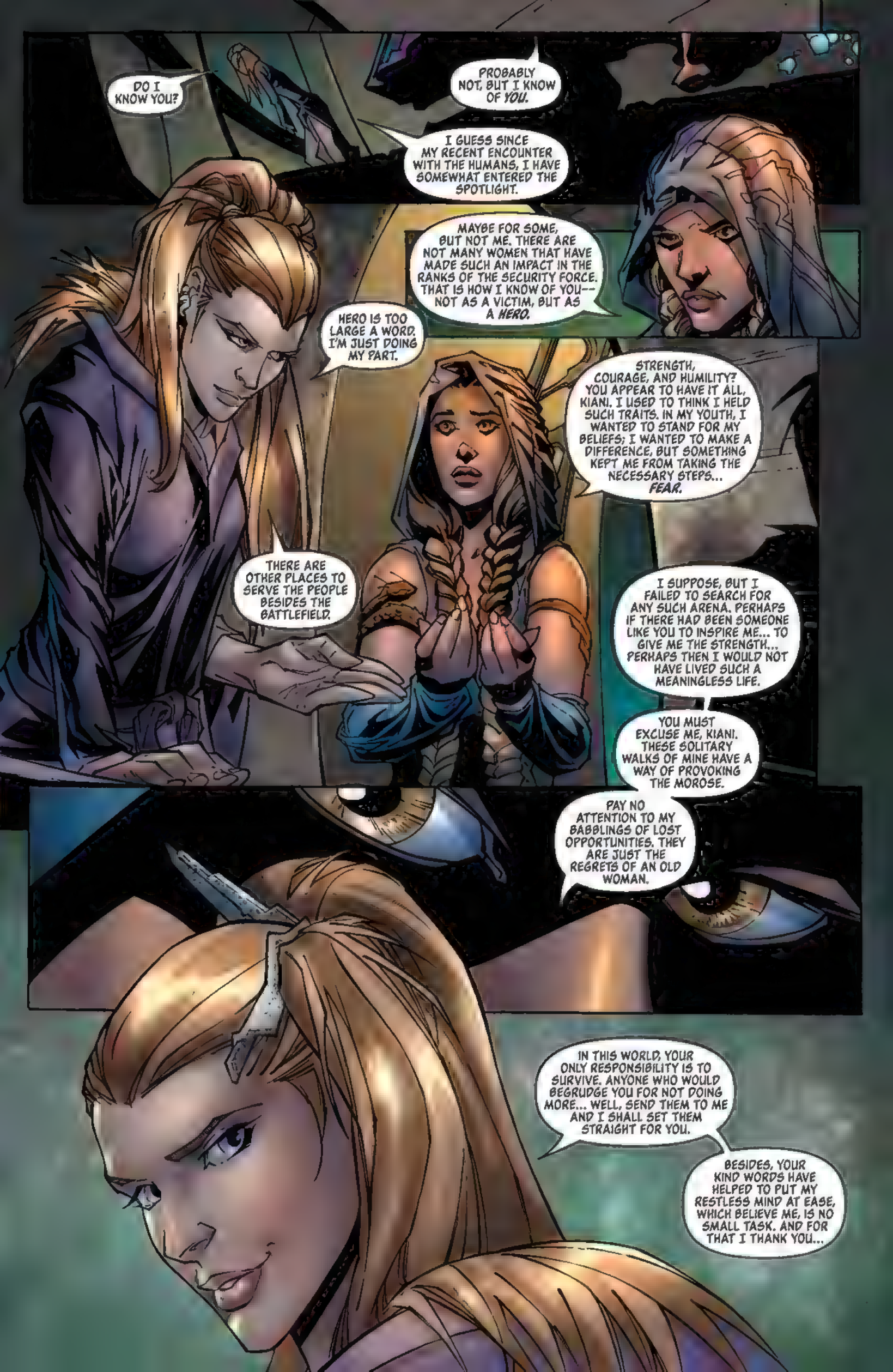
BUT THEN AGAIN, I GUESS IT SHOULD BE DIFFERENT NOW... BECAUSE I AM DIFFERENT TOO.

BEFORE I WAS JUST SOMEONE WHO LOST HER PARENTS IN THE DESTRUCTION OF MARIELLE AND ENDED UP IN THE COUNCIL'S FORCE.

BUT NOW I HAVE ABILITIES I NEVER KNEW... THE ABILITIES OF AN ELITE BLUE. IT CONTRADICTS EVERYTHING I'VE KNOWN UP UNTIL NOW... ABOUT MY PAST AND MY LIFE.

HELLO, KIANI?

ONLY CASQUE AND PERHAPS CANNON COULD SHED SOME LIGHT, BUT NEITHER ONE ARE AROUND AT THE MOMENT. SO MY MIND IS LEFT ALONE TO SPIN AROUND WITH THE ENDLESS QUESTIONS.



DO I
KNOW YOU?

PROBABLY
NOT, BUT I KNOW
OF YOU.

I GUESS SINCE
MY RECENT ENCOUNTER
WITH THE HUMANS, I HAVE
SOMEWHAT ENTERED THE
SPOTLIGHT.

MAYBE FOR SOME,
BUT NOT ME. THERE ARE
NOT MANY WOMEN THAT HAVE
MADE SUCH AN IMPACT IN THE
RANKS OF THE SECURITY FORCE.
THAT IS HOW I KNOW OF YOU--
NOT AS A VICTIM, BUT AS
A HERO.

HERO IS TOO
LARGE A WORD.
I'M JUST DOING
MY PART.

STRENGTH,
COURAGE, AND HUMILITY?
YOU APPEAR TO HAVE IT ALL,
KIANI. I USED TO THINK I HELD
SUCH TRAITS. IN MY YOUTH, I
WANTED TO STAND FOR MY
BELIEFS; I WANTED TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE, BUT SOMETHING
KEPT ME FROM TAKING THE
NECESSARY STEPS...
FEAR.

THERE ARE
OTHER PLACES TO
SERVE THE PEOPLE
BESIDES THE
BATTLEFIELD.

I SUPPOSE, BUT I
FAILED TO SEARCH FOR
ANY SUCH ARENA. PERHAPS
IF THERE HAD BEEN SOMEONE
LIKE YOU TO INSPIRE ME... TO
GIVE ME THE STRENGTH...
PERHAPS THEN I WOULD NOT
HAVE LIVED SUCH A
MEANINGLESS LIFE.

YOU MUST
EXCUSE ME, KIANI.
THESE SOLITARY
WALKS OF MINE HAVE A
WAY OF PROVOKING
THE MOROSE.

PAY NO
ATTENTION TO MY
BABBLINGS OF LOST
OPPORTUNITIES. THEY
ARE JUST THE
REGRETS OF AN OLD
WOMAN.

IN THIS WORLD, YOUR
ONLY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO
SURVIVE. ANYONE WHO WOULD
BEGRUDGE YOU FOR NOT DOING
MORE... WELL, SEND THEM TO ME
AND I SHALL SET THEM
STRAIGHT FOR YOU.

BESIDES, YOUR
KIND WORDS HAVE
HELPED TO PUT MY
RESTLESS MIND AT EASE,
WHICH BELIEVE ME, IS NO
SMALL TASK. AND FOR
THAT I THANK YOU...



...ANYA.

MY NAME
IS ANYA.

THANK YOU,
ANYA.

ANYTIME,
DEAR CHILD.



EVEN THOUGH I'VE GOT A
MILLION QUESTIONS FOR HIM,
IT'S PROBABLY A GOOD THING
THAT WE CAN'T TALK RIGHT
NOW. WITH EVERYTHING FINN
MUST HAVE BEEN THROUGH,
THE LAST THING HE NEEDS IS
A PROBLEM WITH A MOTHER.

I LIKE THE SOUND
OF THAT.

LITTLE MOTHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE
KNOWS ABOUT ME AND
ABOUT MY REAL FATHER,
BUT RIGHT NOW I DON'T CARE.

IT'S ENOUGH JUST
TO BE SWIMMING
TOGETHER AGAIN.

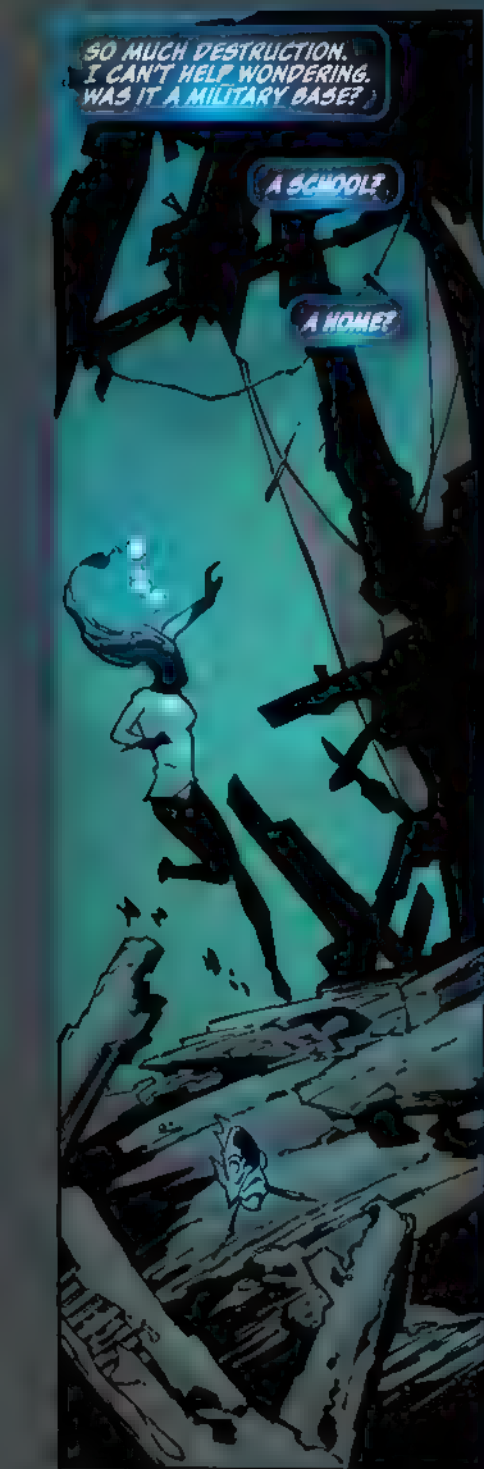
THERE'LL BE TIME LATER TO
PLAY TWENTY QUESTIONS...
ASSUMING I LIVE THROUGH
WHAT LIES AHEAD FOR ME.

AND IF I DON'T... THEN
WELL I GUESS IT REALLY
WON'T MATTER. WILL IT?



MY GOD...

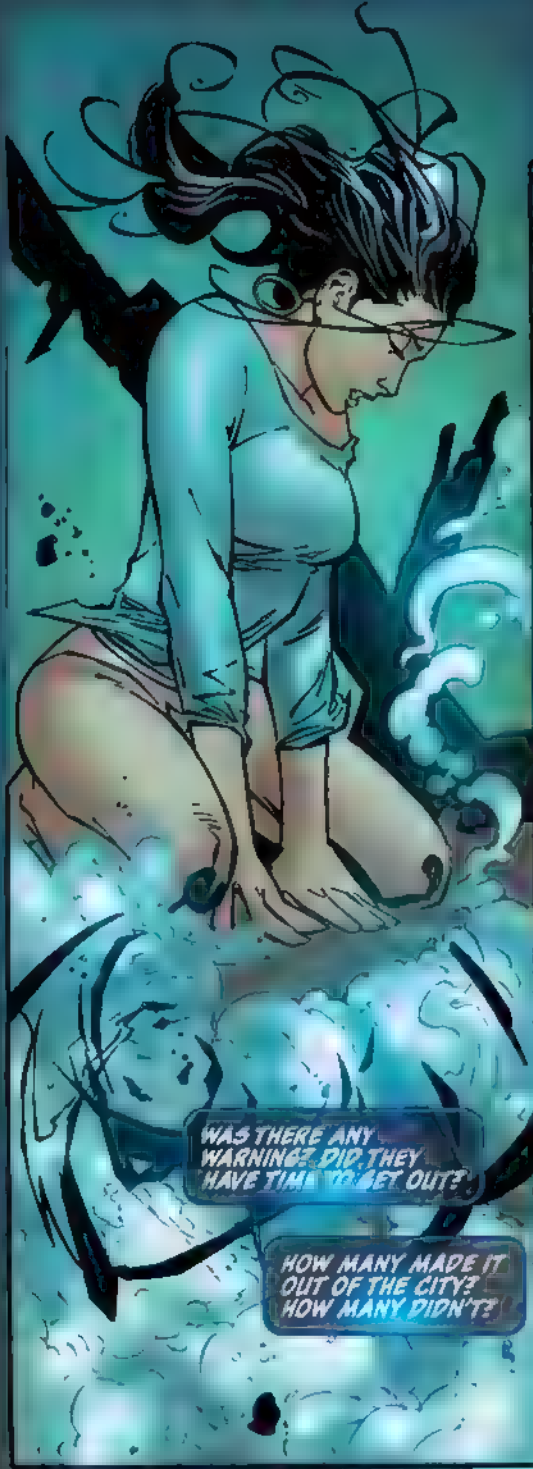
I'VE SEEN PICTURES OF
BOMBED-OUT CITIES BEFORE,
BUT NEVER SOMETHING SO... SO
REAL. HOW COULD MAYLANDER
DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS?



SO MUCH DESTRUCTION.
I CAN'T HELP WONDERING.
WAS IT A MILITARY BASE?

A SCHOOL?

A HOME?



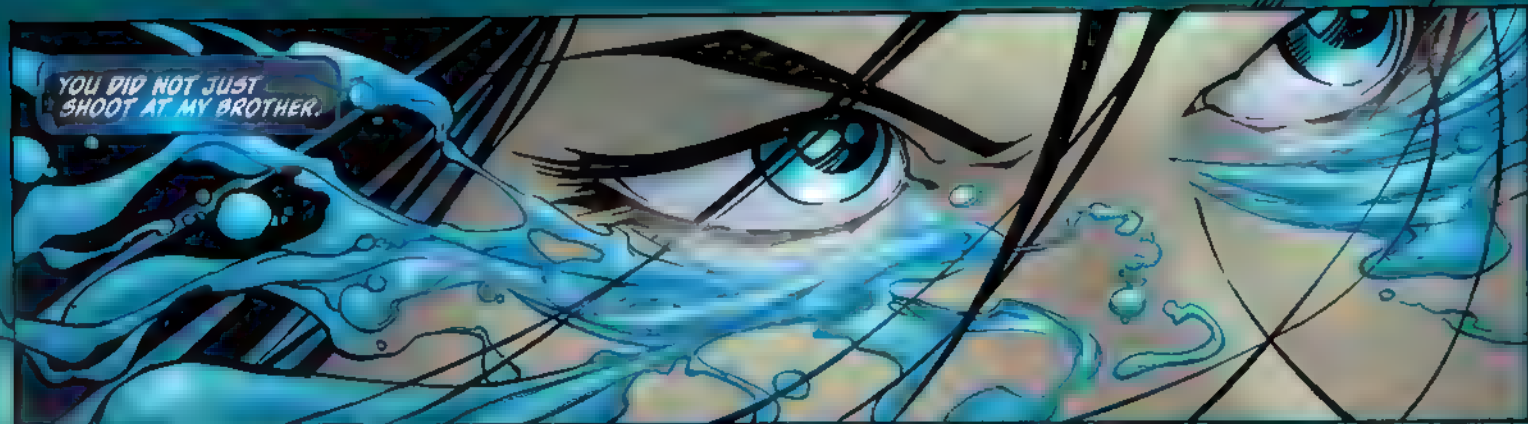
WAS THERE ANY
WARNING? DID THEY
HAVE TIME TO GET OUT?

HOW MANY MADE IT
OUT OF THE CITY?
HOW MANY DIDN'T?



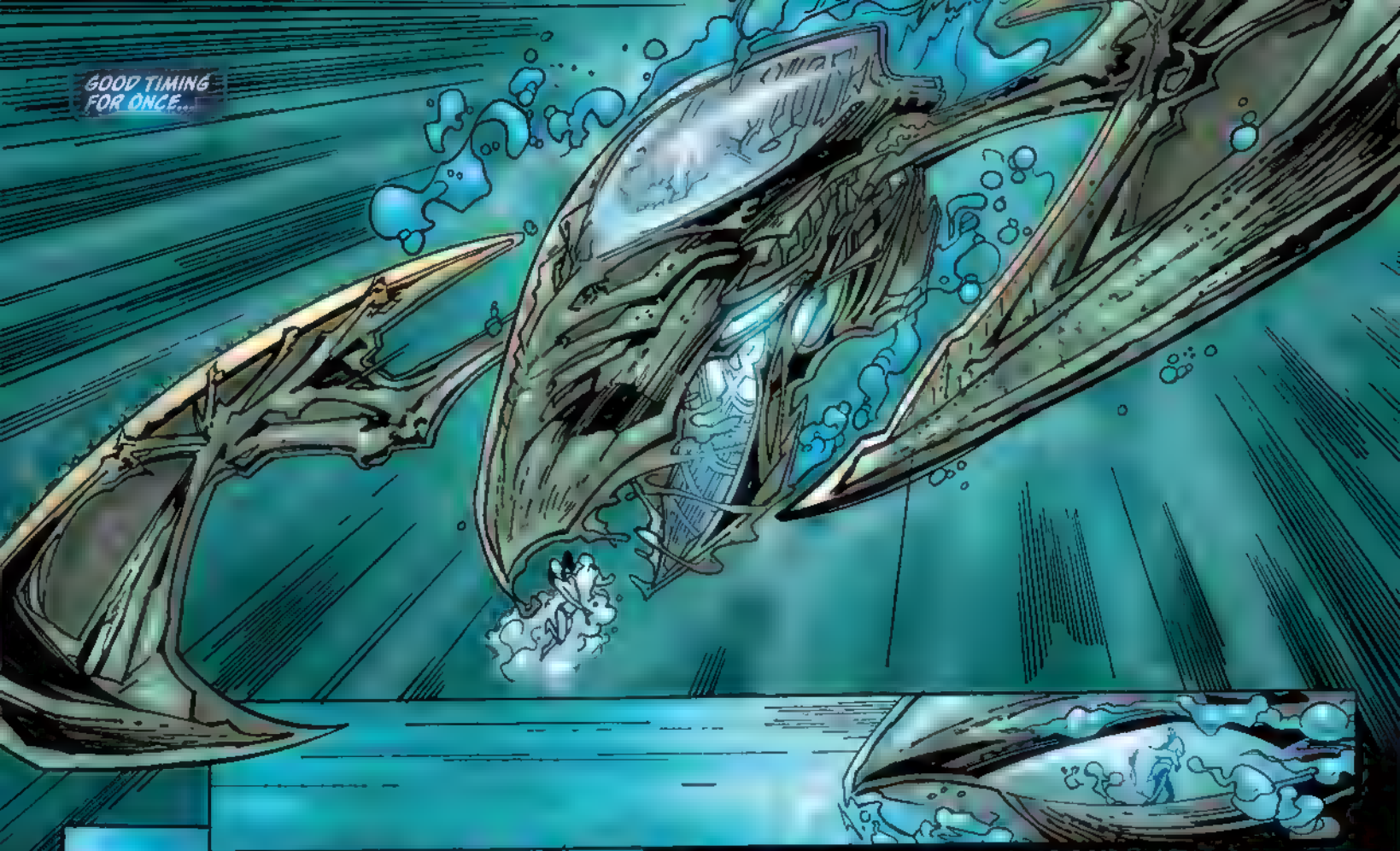
WAIT...
WHERE'S FINN?







GOOD TIMING
FOR ONCE...



CANNON!

YOU GUYS
NEED A RIDE?



UM, IT'S GOOD
TO SEE YOU TOO
ASPEN.

NOW LET'S
GET OUT OF
HERE.





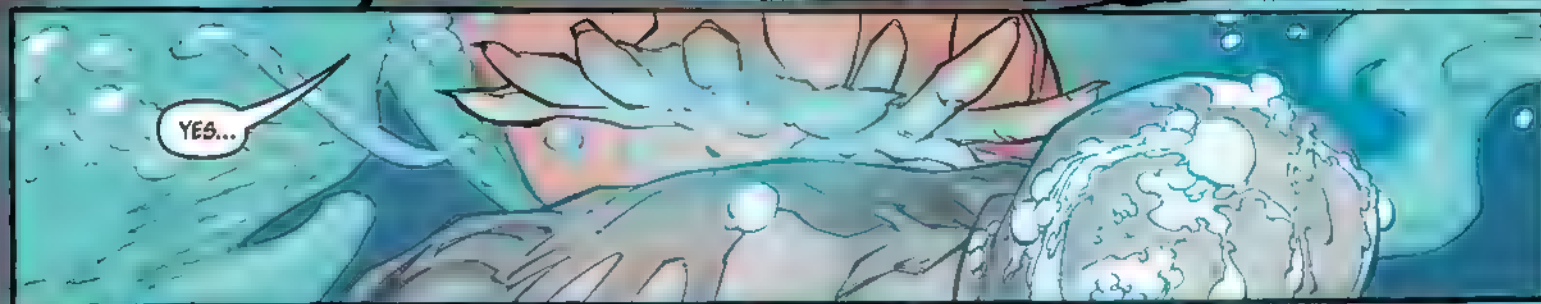
ASPEN...
WAIT...



I CANNOT... I...
I... I MUST REMAIN
IN THE WATER. IT IS
TOO DIFFICULT
FOR ME.

I'M NOT
GOING TO LEAVE
YOU HERE.

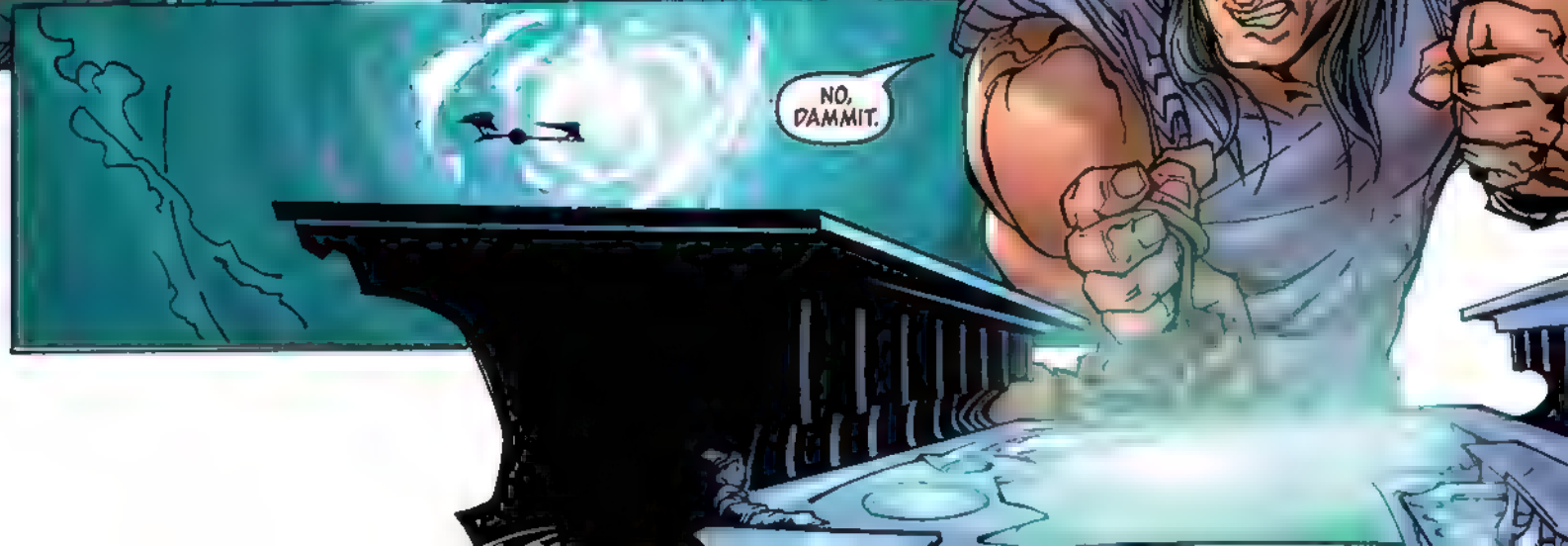
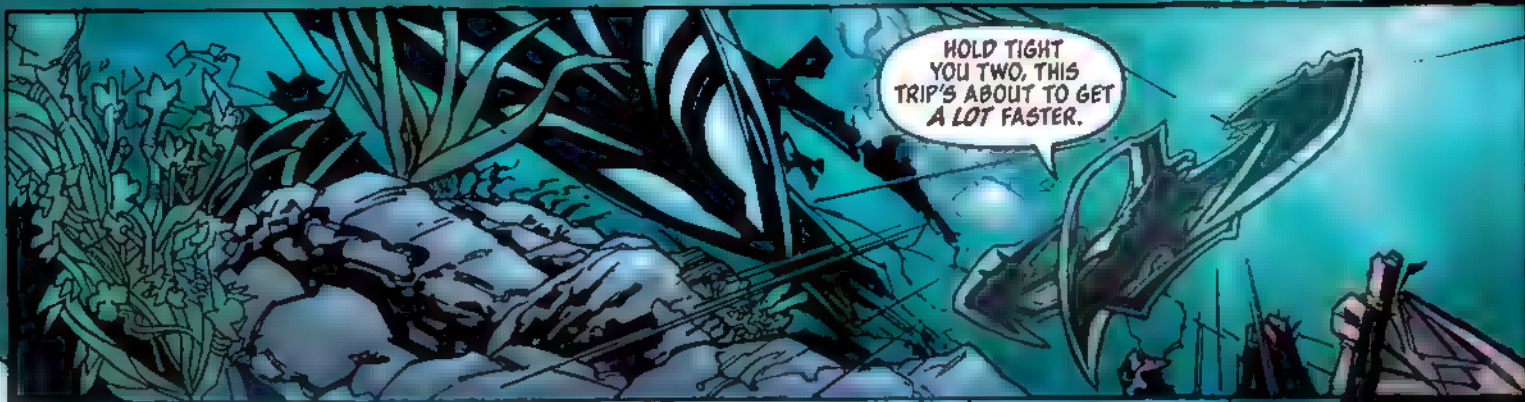
NO...
CHOICE...



YES...



THERE'S
ALWAYS A
CHOICE.





IT'S
DONE, SIR.

COUNCILMAN ALDEN,
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THE
LACK OF THOUGHT BEHIND THIS
MOVE. IN DEACTIVATING THE
HYDROPORTS YOU CUT OFF EVERY
OTHER CITY OF THE BLUE FROM
MURIA. IF ANOTHER ONE GETS
ATTACKED LIKE SABA, WE'LL BE
UNABLE TO HELP THEM.

FIRST YOU BERATE
THE COUNCIL FOR NOT
BEING DECISIVE, NOW YOU
THINK US HASTY. SIPHON,
YOU'RE RATHER FICKLE IN
YOUR YOUNG AGE.

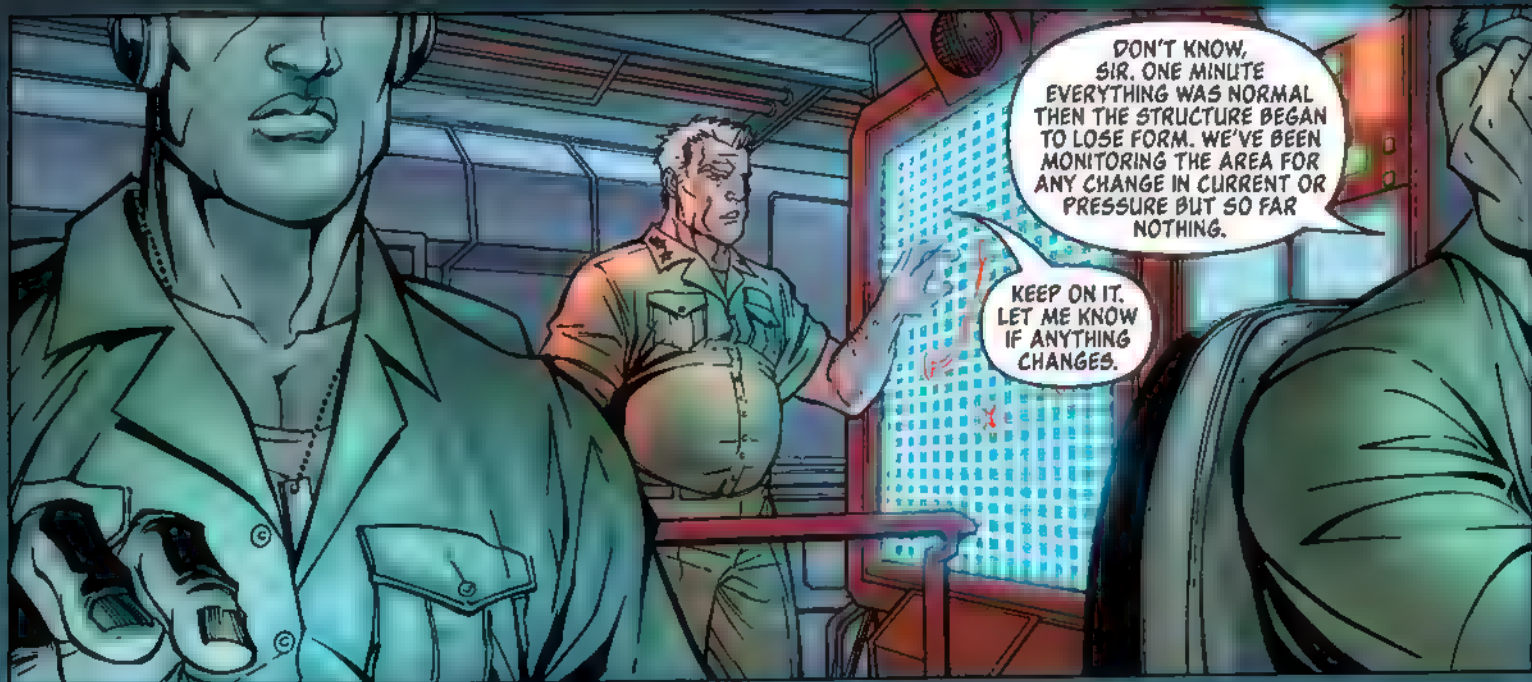
I FAIL
TO SEE ANY
HUMOR IN
THIS.

YOU FAIL TO SEE QUITE
A BIT. THIS IS NOT ABOUT
ANSWERING THE CALL OF SABA. THIS
IS ABOUT *SAVING* OUR WORLD. OUR
OUTER CITIES PUT ALL OF US IN HARM'S
WAY. THE HUMANS ARE NOT ALLIES AND
THEY'LL NEVER VIEW US AS ANYTHING BUT
ENEMIES TO BE DESTROYED. WE HAVE TWO
CHOICES... PULL BACK AND RETREAT AWAY
FROM THEM OR DECLARE WAR. SURELY
YOU REALIZE THAT THE LATTER WOULD
ALMOST CERTAINLY LEAD TO THE
END OF BOTH WORLDS.

THERE HAS
BEEN A STEADY
INFLUX OF CITIZENS
FROM OTHER CITIES
SINCE SABA WAS
ATTACKED.

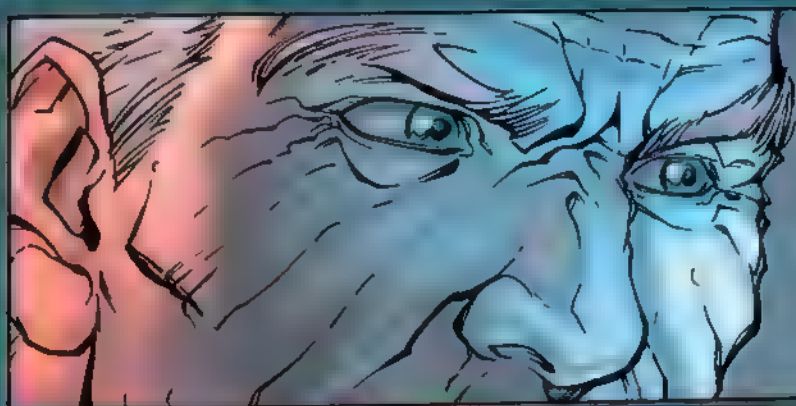
YOU THINK BY
CUTTING THEM
OFF THE REST WILL
FOLLOW THEIR
LEAD.

AH, A GLIMMER
OF INTUITION.
PERHAPS THERE IS
HOPE FOR YOU
YET.



DON'T KNOW, SIR. ONE MINUTE EVERYTHING WAS NORMAL THEN THE STRUCTURE BEGAN TO LOSE FORM. WE'VE BEEN MONITORING THE AREA FOR ANY CHANGE IN CURRENT OR PRESSURE BUT SO FAR NOTHING.

KEEP ON IT. LET ME KNOW IF ANYTHING CHANGES.



SMART. CUTTING YOUR LOSSES LIKE THAT, DOESN'T MATTER THOUGH. WE STILL GOT YOU.



WHAT'S OUR STATUS?

ACHILLES DEPTH 2880, ADMIRAL. SPEED THIRTY KNOTS.

MAINTAIN SPEED AND HEADING AND SAY A LITTLE PRAYER THAT THE ENGINEERS WHO DESIGNED OUR BEHEMOTHS DIDN'T SCREW UP THEIR LONG DIVISION...

...BECAUSE
WE'RE GOING TO
PUT THEIR DEPTH
LIMIT SPECS TO
THE TEST.



TO BE
CONTINUED...



VOL. 2

#9

OF 11

COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Nine of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
story

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SAL REGLA
JONATHAN GLAPION
& SALEEM CRAWFORD

inks

PAUL MOUNTS
colors

DREAMER DESIGN
letters

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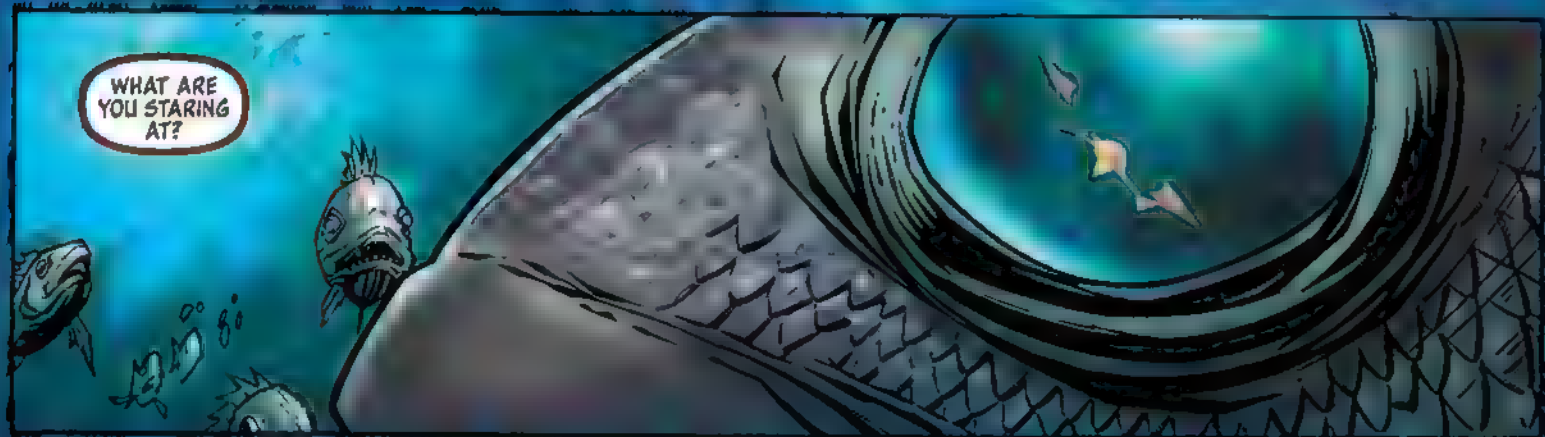
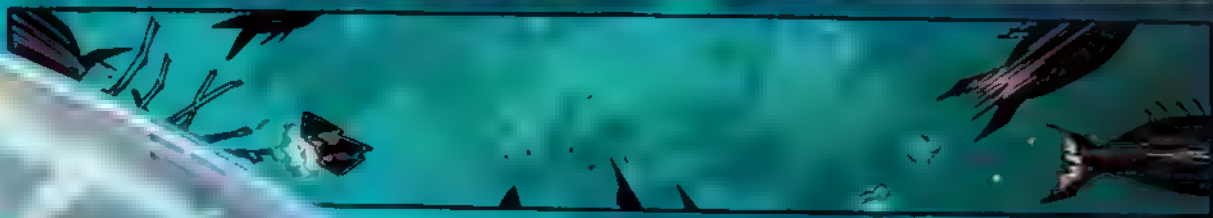
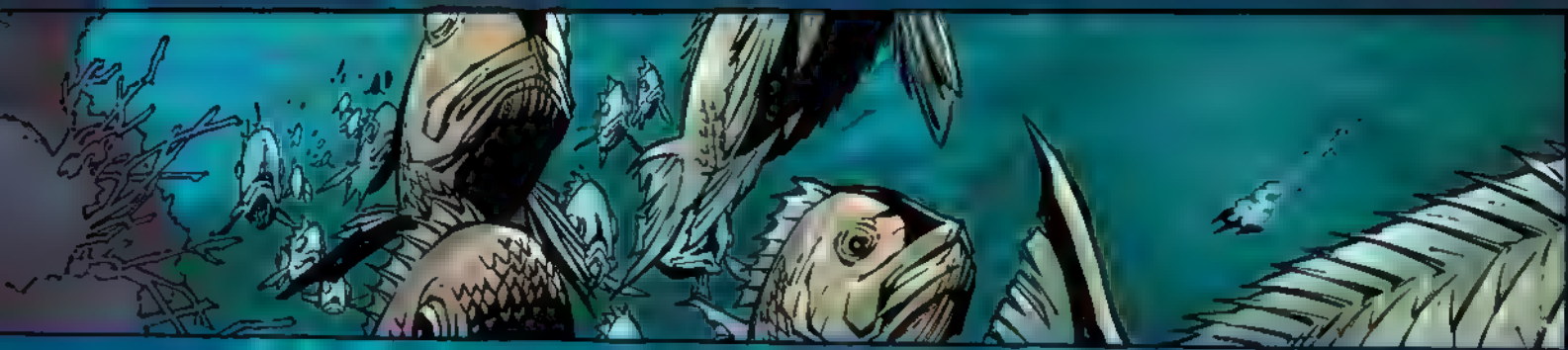
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WHAT ARE
YOU STARING
AT?



WAS I STARING?
I'M SORRY. I WAS
JUST LOOKING.

AT WHAT?



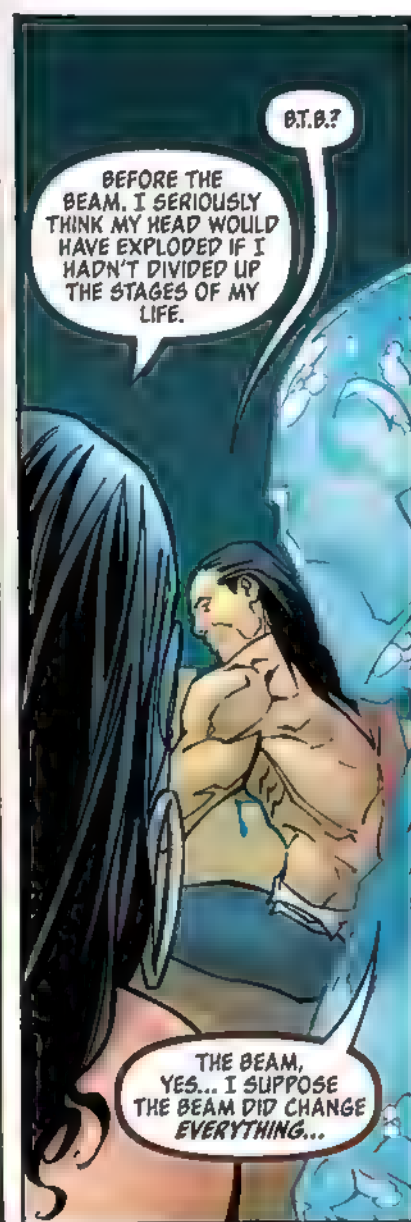
I WAS TRYING TO SEE IF I COULD GET A GLIMPSE OF YOUR REAL FACE THROUGH YOUR BLUE MASK.



IT'S NOT A MASK.



SORRY. THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT. I JUST... UM... MY MIND IS STILL A BIT FUZZY ON THE DETAILS OF MY PAST. GUESS I'M JUST TRYING TO REMEMBER WHAT YOU LOOKED LIKE... YOU KNOW... *A.T.A.*



B.T.B.?

BEFORE THE BEAM, I SERIOUSLY THINK MY HEAD WOULD HAVE EXPLODED IF I HADN'T DIVIDED UP THE STAGES OF MY LIFE.

THE BEAM, YES... I SUPPOSE THE BEAM DID CHANGE EVERYTHING...

WE WERE
FLYING... ABOVE
THE SURFACE

FLYING? WE WERE
RUNNING FOR OUR LIVES,
FINN! OUR PARENTS WERE
DEAD AND KILLIAN WAS
AFTER US.

ALSO, I DO SEEM TO
REMEMBER TELLING YOU
NOT TO PRESS THAT BUTTON.
WHATEVER IT WAS DESIGNED TO
DO, IT CAUSED SOME SORT OF
CHAIN REACTION IN THE
SHIP.

IT WASN'T THE
SHIP, ASPEN; IT WAS
THE **SKYBIRD**— A
SATELLITE DEFENSE
SYSTEM USED BY
THE **BLUE**.

DEFENSE? IT SURE
AS HELL FELT **OFFENSIVE**
TO ME. IT TORE THROUGH THE
SHIP AND WORSE YET...
THROUGH YOU. THAT WAS THE
LAST THING I REMEMBER
BEFORE WAKING UP ON
THE **PARADISE**.

HYDROPORT—
WORMHOLES OF ENERGY
WITHIN THE WATERS OF THE
WORLD THAT WERE USED AS
TRANSPORTATION PORTALS. THE ENERGY
OF THE **SKYBIRD**'S BLAST WAS THE
CAUSE OF THE CHAIN REACTION—
SENDING YOU AND THE **PARADISE**
INTO A TIME FLUX WITHIN THE
HYDROPORT.

A WHAT?

THAT'S BECAUSE
IT NOT ONLY HIT THE
CRAFT AND THE HUMAN
SHIP, IT ALSO HIT A
HYDROPORT DEEP
WITHIN THE OCEAN.

YOU SIMPLY
DISAPPEARED. I
THOUGHT YOU DIED
IN THE BLAST.

THEN **TEN**
YEARS LATER, I SAW
YOU AND THE SHIP
REAPPEAR AS THOUGH
NOT A SECOND HAD
GONE BY.

WHEN THE SHIP
DOCKED, I COULDN'T
REACH YOU BECAUSE OF
THE HUMAN MILITARY
PRESENCE. THEY TRIED TO
CONTAIN THE SCENE, BUT
LUCKILY THEY DIDN'T EVEN
BAT AN EYE WHEN THEY
SAW YOU, ASPEN.

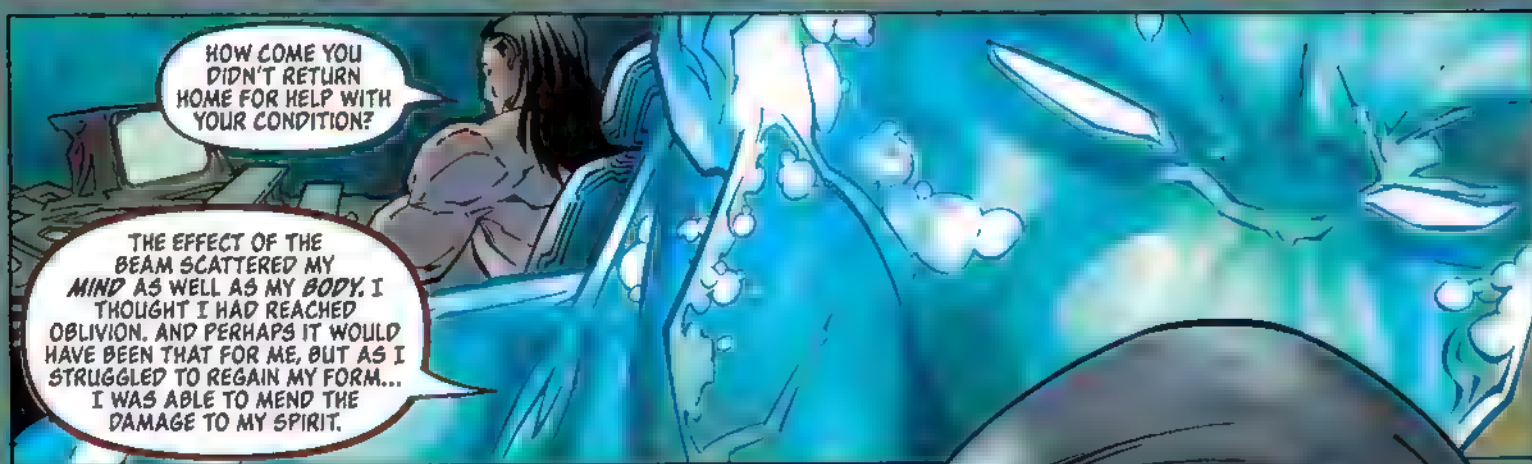
AND I KNEW
YOU WOULD BE
SAFE FOR THE
TIME BEING.



AND MY NEW MISSION WAS ONE OF *PATIENCE*-- WATCHING OVER YOU UNTIL WE COULD BE TOGETHER.

FOR SOMEONE WHO WAS *ZAPPED* DURING THE WHOLE ORDEAL, YOU SURE DO SEEM TO HAVE IT DOWN PAT.

LET'S JUST SAY THE TIME SPENT WORKING TO REGAIN MY FORM GAVE ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO REFLECT ON THE EVENTS OF THAT DAY.



HOW COME YOU DIDN'T RETURN HOME FOR HELP WITH YOUR CONDITION?

THE EFFECT OF THE BEAM SCATTERED MY *MIND* AS WELL AS MY *BODY*. I THOUGHT I HAD REACHED OBLIVION. AND PERHAPS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THAT FOR ME, BUT AS I STRUGGLED TO REGAIN MY FORM... I WAS ABLE TO MEND THE DAMAGE TO MY SPIRIT.

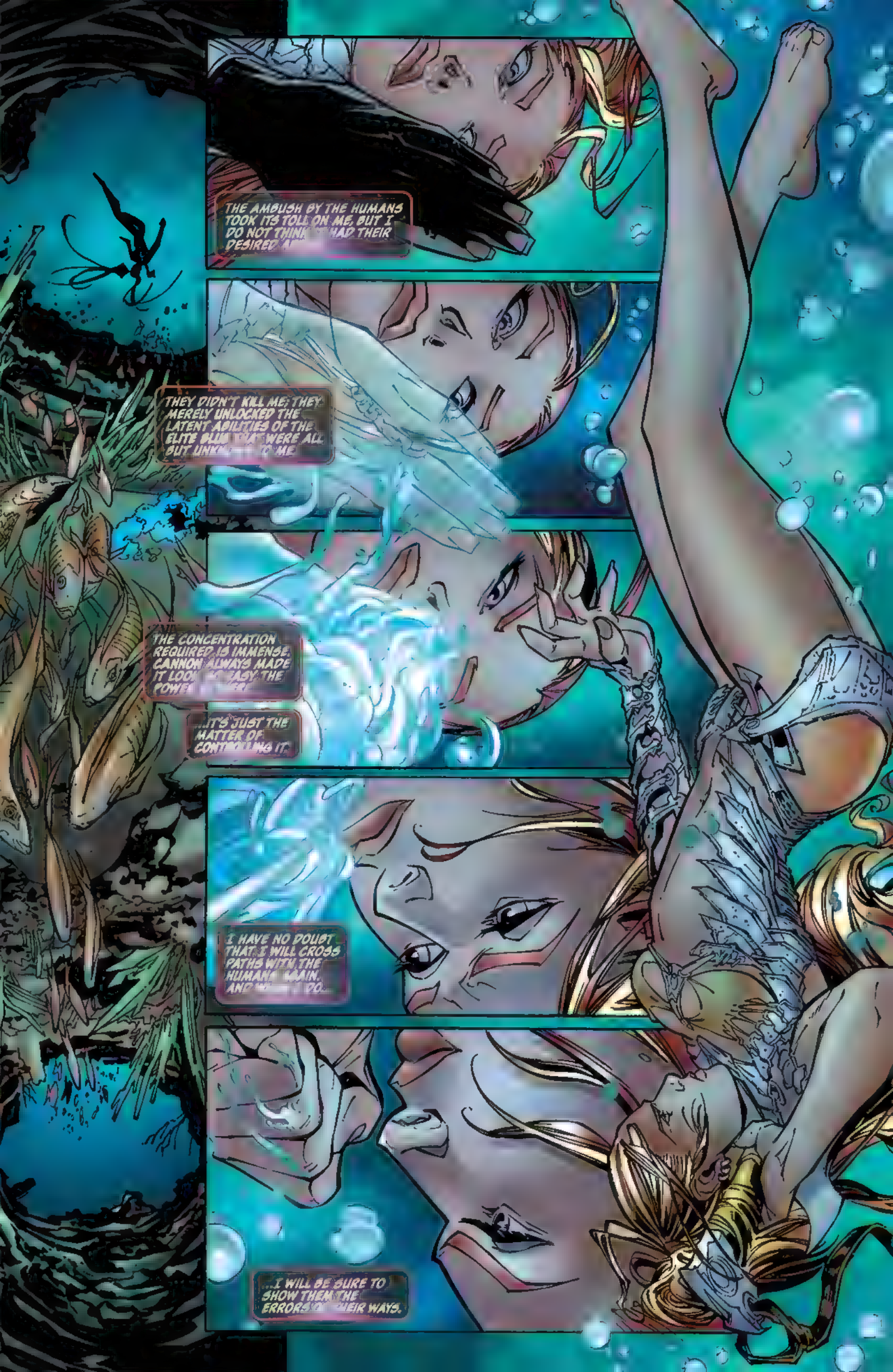
DO YOU EVER THINK... WILL YOU BE ABLE TO REGAIN IT COMPLETELY? GO BACK TO THE WAY YOU WERE...

B.T.B.?

YEAH...



I'M WORKING ON IT.



THE AMBUSH BY THE HUMANS
TOOK ITS TOLL ON ME, BUT I
DO NOT THINK I HAD THEIR
DESIRED A...

THEY DIDN'T KILL ME; THEY
MERELY UNLOCKED THE
LATENT ABILITIES OF THE
ELITE BLUE THAT WERE ALL
BUT UNKNOWN TO ME.

THE CONCENTRATION
REQUIRED IS IMMENSE.
CANNON ALWAYS MADE
IT LOOK SO EASY. THE
POWER...

IT'S JUST THE
MATTER OF
CONTROLLING IT.

I HAVE NO DOUBT
THAT I WILL CROSS
PATHS WITH THE
HUMANS AGAIN.
AND WHEN I DO...

...I WILL BE SURE TO
SHOW THEM THE
ERRORS OF THEIR WAYS.

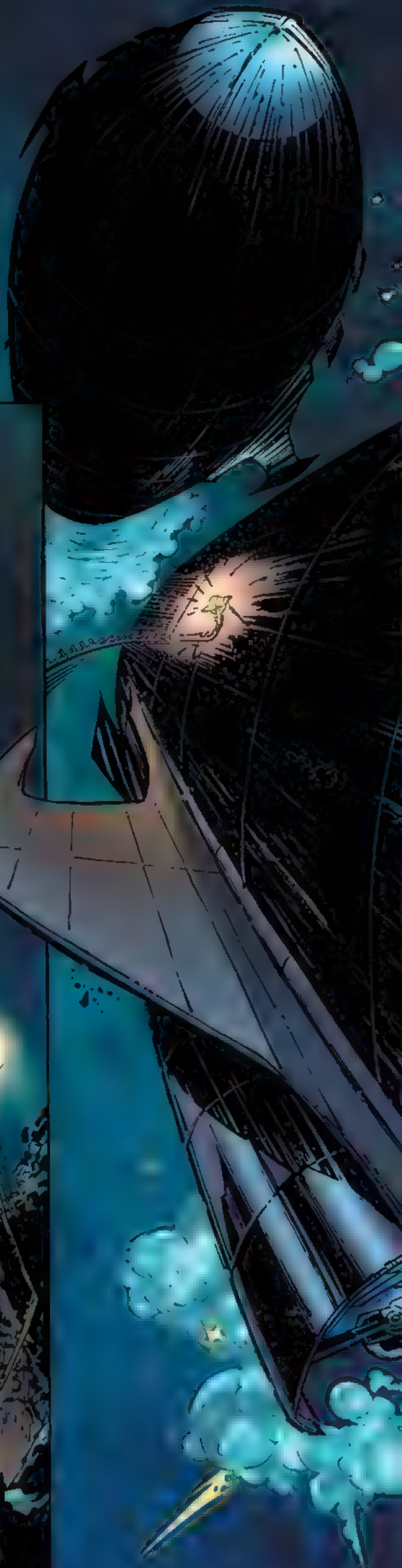
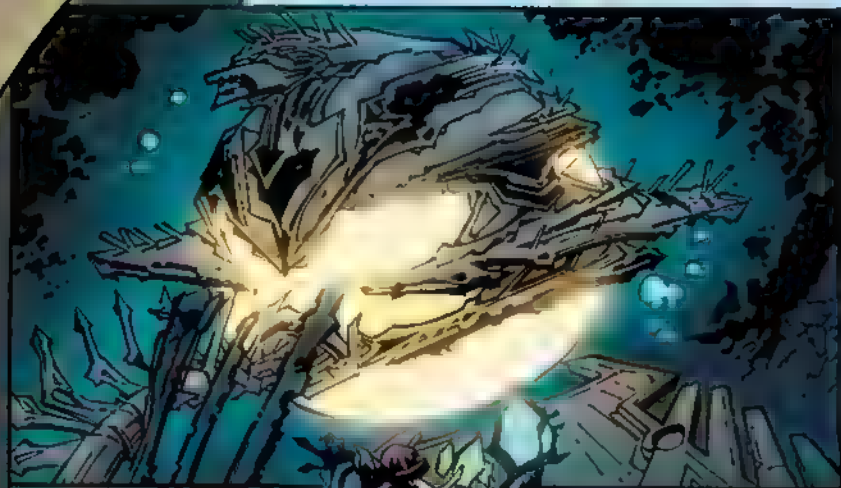
SIR, TAKE
A LOOK AT
THIS.

THE SYSTEM IS
REGISTERING A
CHANGE IN DENSITY
ALONG THE EIGHTY-
FOURTH LEVEL, BUT
ALL OF THE OTHER
MONITORS ARE
CLEAR.

LAUNCH
VISUAL PROBE...
LET'S SEE WHAT'S
GOING ON UP
THERE.

YES, SIR.

LAUNCHING
PROBE.



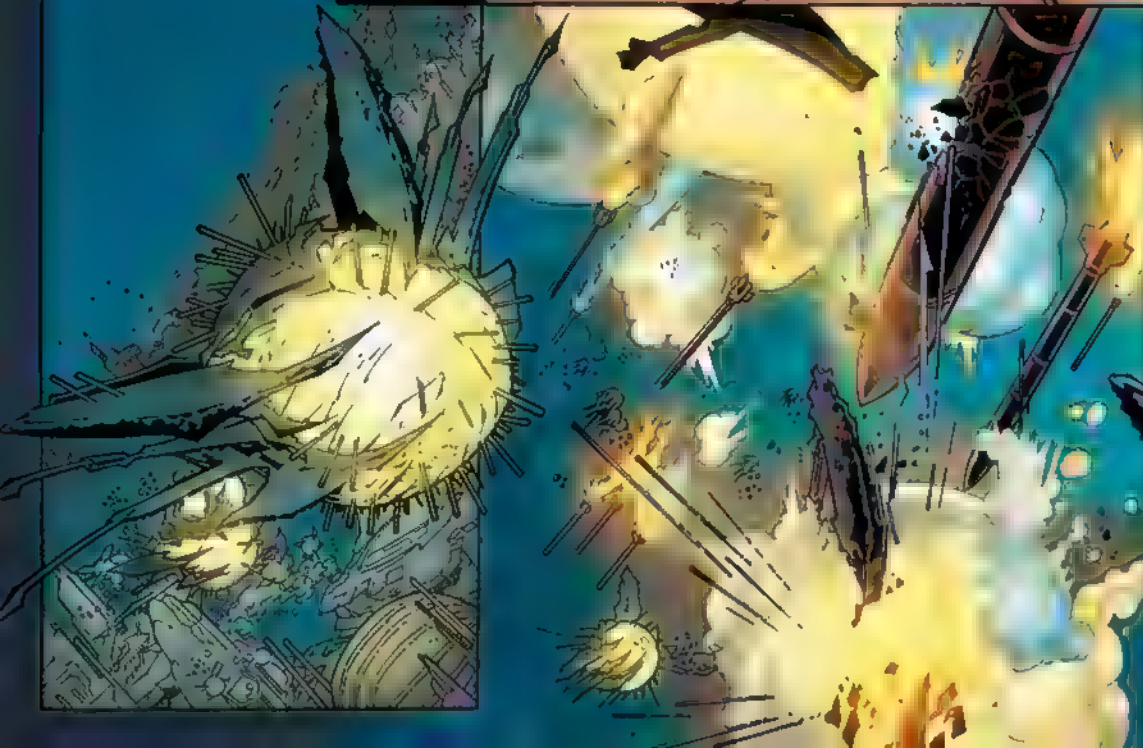


SIR!
WE'VE GOT
INCOMING!



ENGAGE
DEFENSIVE
PROTOCOLS!

INITIATE ALL
FIGHTERS!

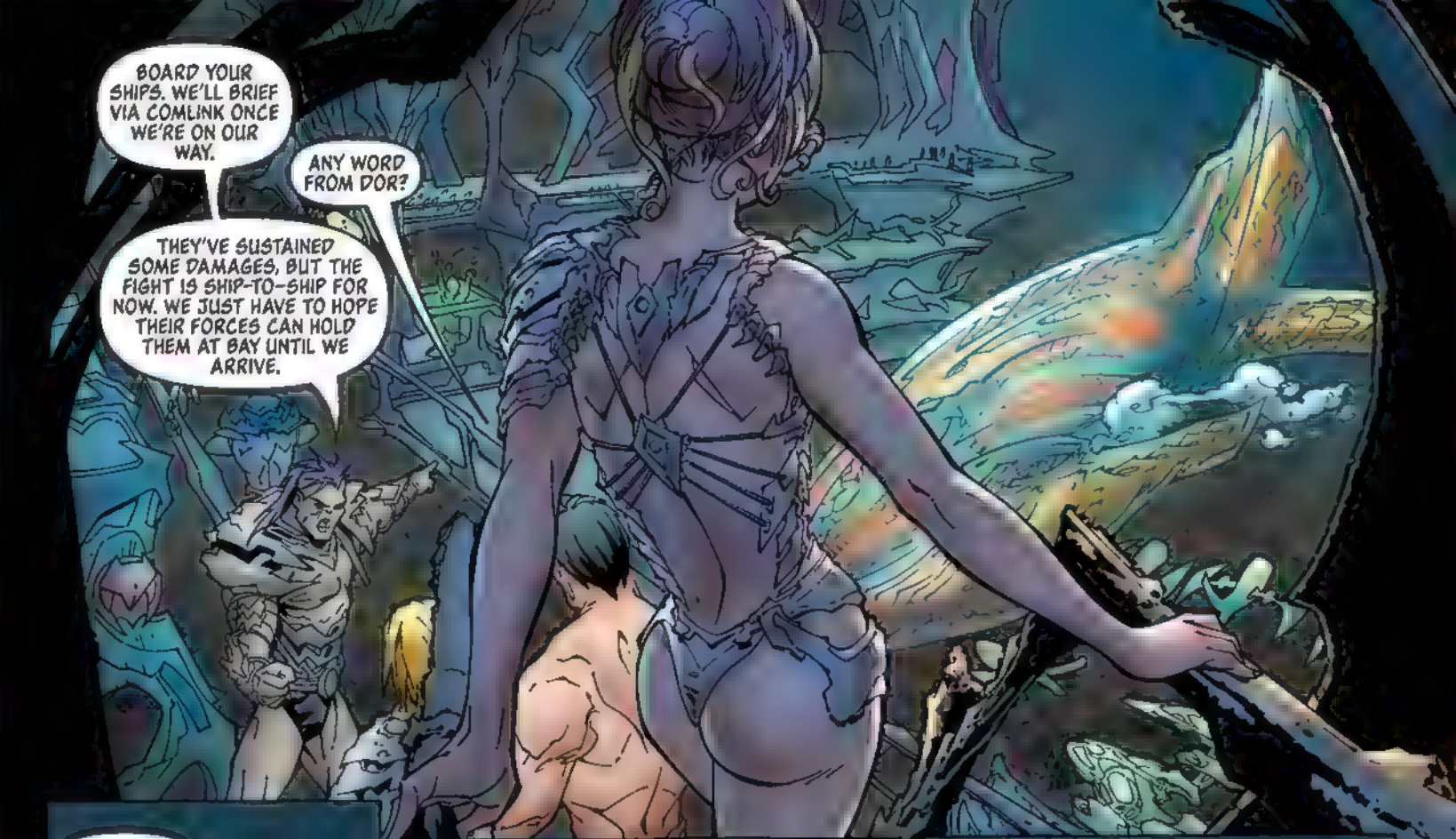


SIR, DEFENSIVE
INTERCEPTION
RATE... NINETY-
TWO PERCENT.

GOOD...
BUT NOT GOOD
ENOUGH.



FULL ALERT
BRACE FOR
IMPACT!



BOARD YOUR SHIPS. WE'LL BRIEF VIA COMLINK ONCE WE'RE ON OUR WAY.

ANY WORD FROM DOR?

THEY'VE SUSTAINED SOME DAMAGES, BUT THE FIGHT IS SHIP-TO-SHIP FOR NOW. WE JUST HAVE TO HOPE THEIR FORCES CAN HOLD THEM AT BAY UNTIL WE ARRIVE.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

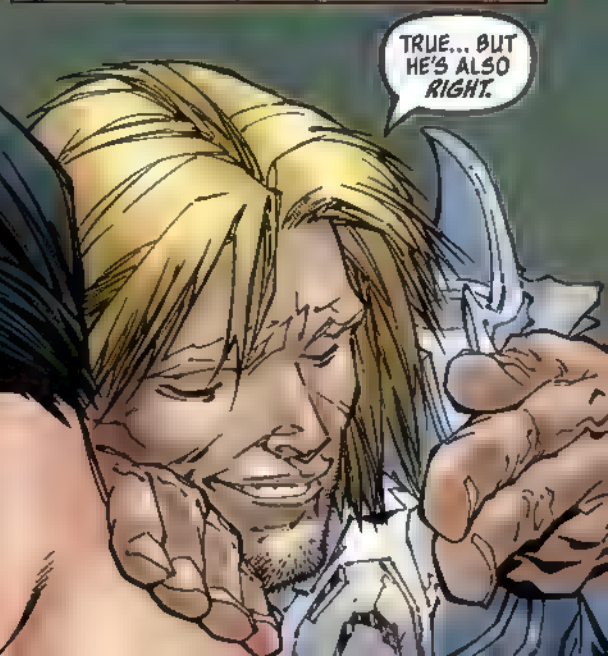
GEARING UP.

SIPHON, YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL, NOT A SOLDIER. YOU BELONG IN THE COMMAND CENTER.

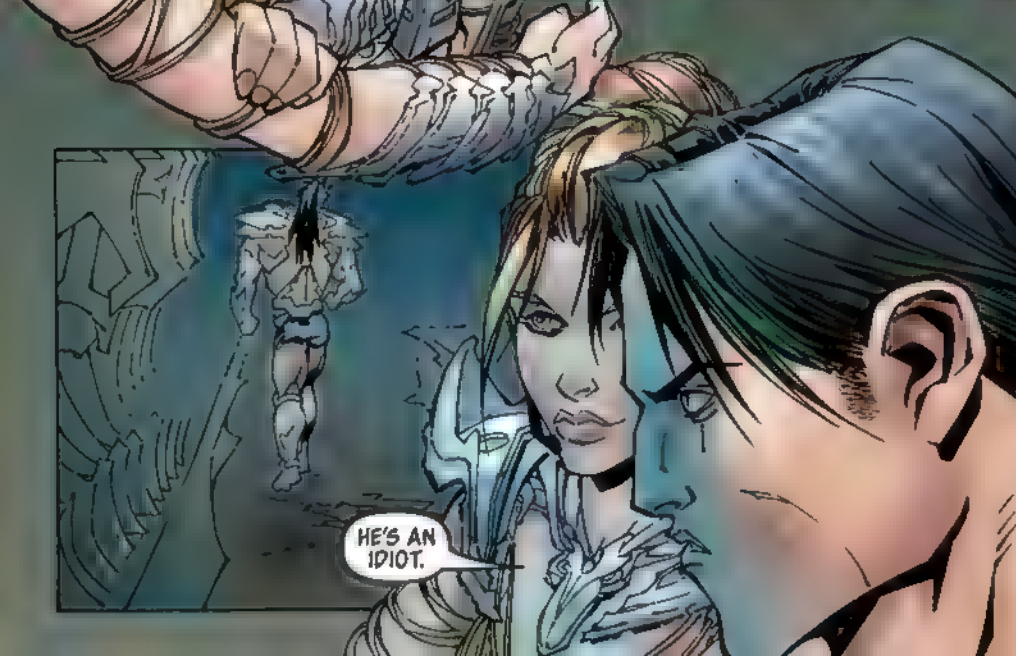
THIS ISN'T SOME SMALL INCURSION. THIS IS AN ALL-OUT ASSAULT. YOU NEED ALL THE HELP YOU CAN GET.



YEAH, AND YOU CAN HELP BY GETTING OUT OF OUR WAY SO WE CAN LAUNCH.



TRUE... BUT HE'S ALSO RIGHT.



HE'S AN IDIOT.

WHAT?

FACE IT, SIPHON. TIMES ARE CHANGING. YOU'RE NOT A SOLDIER ANYMORE.

THANKS A LOT.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN. YOU HAVE A CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE *GREATER THAN ANY SOLDIER* ON ANY BATTLEFIELD. YOU CAN CREATE CHANGE FROM THE TOP DOWN.

THINK ABOUT IT. YOU KNOW THIS FLEET... INSIDE AND OUT. YOU KNOW WHAT IT'S CAPABLE OF BETTER THAN ANY OF THE OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS.

I'M A TOKEN MEMBER, *BRANDE*.

YOU'RE AS MUCH OF A LEADER AS YOU CHOOSE TO BE.

TELL HIM, *KIANI*.

I KNOW THAT I'D FEEL BETTER IF SOMEONE WITH HALF A BRAIN WAS SUPERVISING THE OPERATION.

IF I STAY BEHIND, YOU TWO HAVE TO PROMISE TO LIMIT THE HEROICS UP THERE.

NONE OF WHAT I DO WILL BE WORTH A DAMN IF YOU GUYS DON'T COME BACK IN ONE PIECE.

AND THAT GOES *DOUBLE* FOR YOU, *KIANI*. GOT IT?

GOT IT.

DID YOU EVEN HEAR THE PART WHERE SHE SAID YOU ONLY HAVE HALF A BRAIN?

GOOD LUCK TO YOU TOO, *BRANDE*.

COMMAND:
THIS IS KREEG.
CURRENT CHARTING
3816. TIME TO DOR.
FOUR MINUTES.

VERY WELL.
MAINTAIN COURSE
AND SPEED.

ALDEN, THAT
WILL PUT THEM
RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE WAR ZONE.

EXACTLY.
THAT'S WHERE
THEY ARE
NEEDED.

KREEG, THIS IS
SIPHON. CHANGE
HEADING TO 4220. DOR
COMMANDER, PULL
ENEMY FIRE TO EIGHTH
QUADRANT.

IF THEY CAN
DRAW THE HUMANS
TOWARD THEM, OUR
FIGHTERS CAN ENGAGE FROM
THE SOUTHWEST AND PIN
THE ENEMY BETWEEN
OUR TWO FORCES.

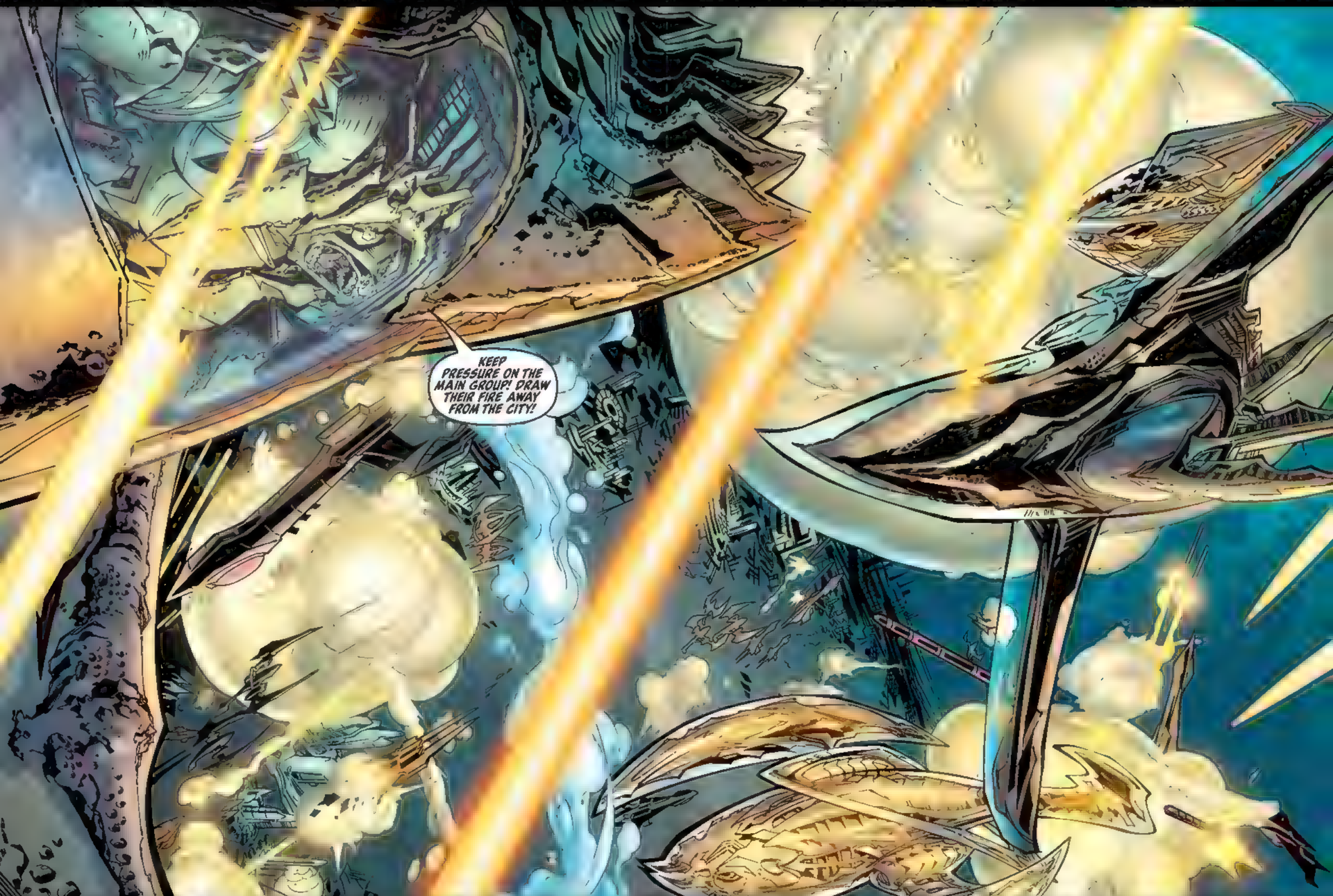
GOOD IDEA,
SIPHON.

ONLY IF IT
WORKS.

IT FEELS SO DETACHED
WATCHING THE BATTLE
FROM HERE. JUST
SLIPS OFF THE SCREEN.

BUT THEY ARE NOT
JUST DATA. THEY
ARE PEOPLE.

AND MY
FRIENDS



KEEP
PRESSURE ON THE
MAIN GROUP! DRAW
THEIR FIRE AWAY
FROM THE CITY!





KIANI LOOK OUT! HE'S GOT A LOCK ON YOUR SHIP!

I KNOW..

...BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE A LOCK ON ME.

KIANI!

I CAN FEEL IT... THE POWER BURNING INSIDE ME.

...BURNING.

IT'S RAW... IT'S INSTINCTUAL...



IT'S INCREDIBLE

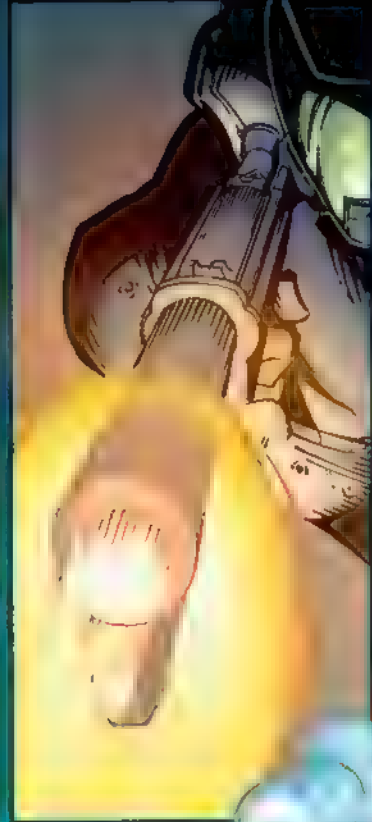
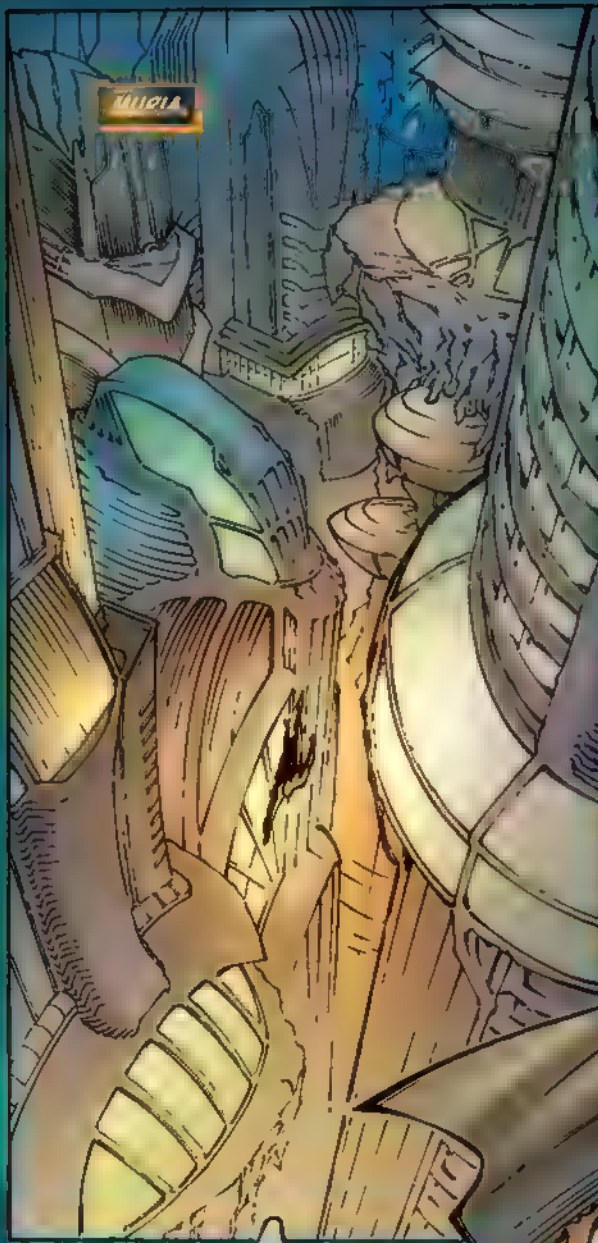


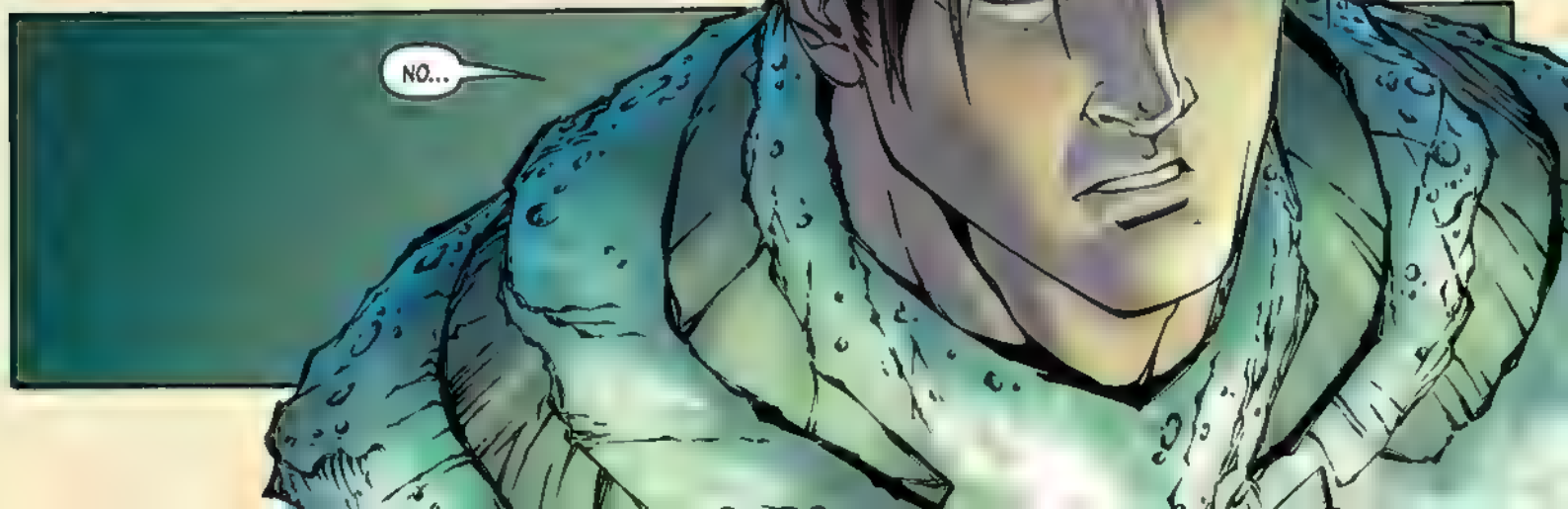
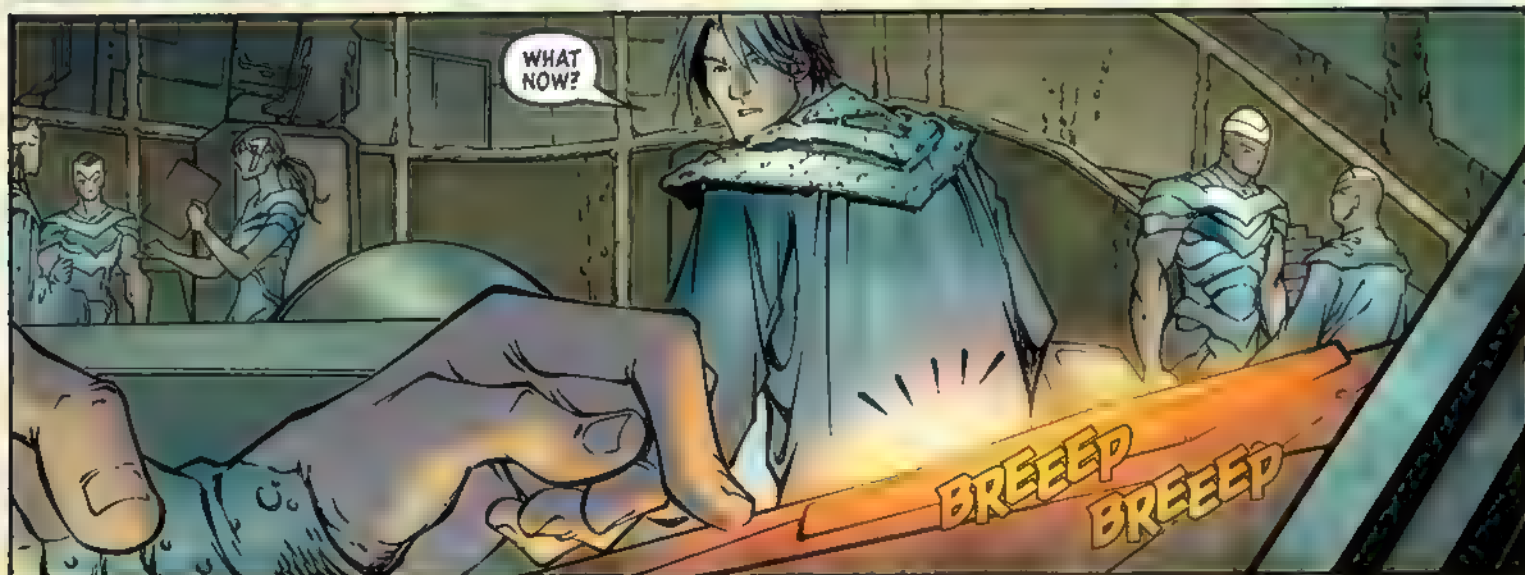
GUESS BAD NEWS TRAVELS FAST.
WE MUST BE GETTING CLOSE TO
THE CITY THAT IS UNDER SIEGE.

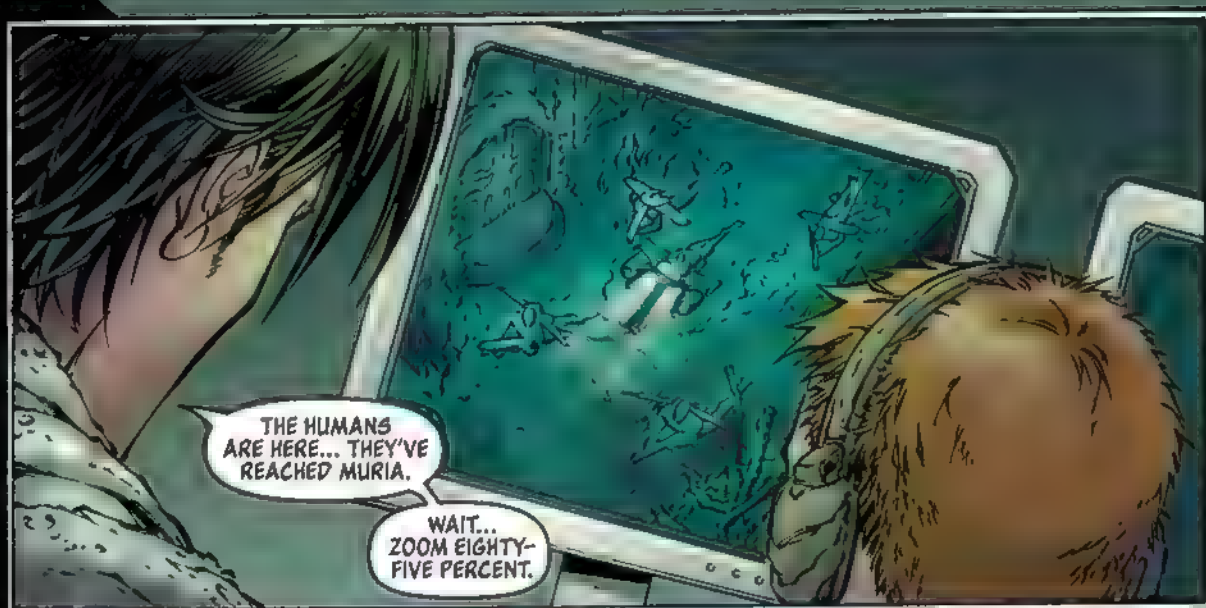
I STILL CANNOT
HELP FEELING
PUSHED INTO
THIS WAR.

I MAY HAVE LIVED ABOVE THE
SURFACE FOR YEARS, BUT THERE
IS NO DENYING THAT THESE ARE
MY PEOPLE. I HAD HOPED TO BE
ABLE TO MAKE SOME SENSE OUT
OF THINGS BEFORE BEING
CONFRONTED WITH THIS DECISION.

BUT IT'S A WAR... WHAT
SENSE CAN BE MADE
FROM ANY OF IT.







ASPEN
Vol. 2

#10
OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Ten of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER

story

KOI TURNBULL

pencils

SAL REGLA

inks

PAUL MOUNTS

colors

DREAMER DESIGN

letters

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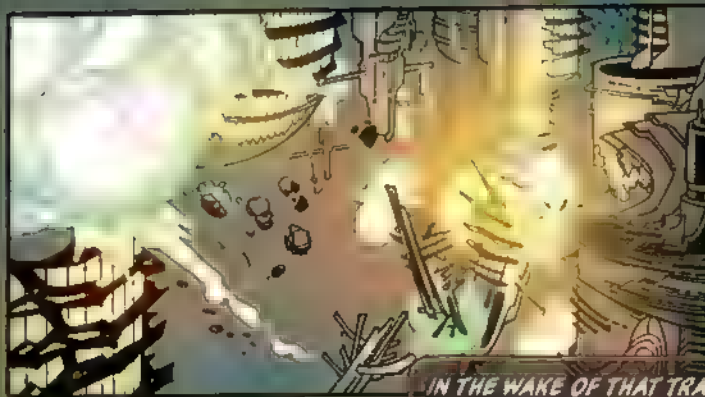
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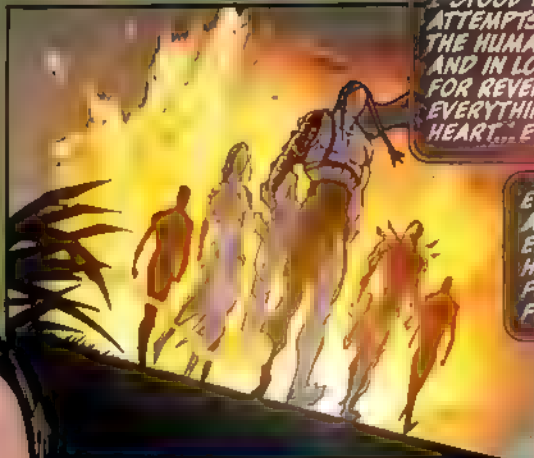
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EVER SINCE I CAN REMEMBER, WE HAVE BEEN AT ODDS WITH THE WORLD ABOVE.

I WAS BARELY EVEN A WOMAN WHEN THE CITY OF MARIELLE WAS DESTROYED BY THE HUMANS... SUPPOSEDLY INADVERTENTLY DURING TESTING FOR A NEW WEAPON OF SOME KIND.



IN THE WAKE OF THAT TRAGEDY, I STOOD WITH KILLIAN IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO STRIKE BACK AT THE HUMANS. WE WERE YOUNG AND IN LOVE, BUT HIS DESIRE FOR REVENGE OVERPOWERED EVERYTHING ELSE IN HIS HEART... EVEN ME.



EVENTUALLY, I STOOD AGAINST HIM AND HIS EXTREMIST AGENDA. THERE HAD TO BE A BETTER WAY FOR US TO FIND SOLACE FROM THE HUMANS.



KILLIAN SAW NO SUCH POTENTIAL. FOR HIM, IT WAS ALWAYS AN US OR THEM ATTITUDE. IN THE END, HE DIED FOR HIS CAUSE DURING HIS ATTEMPT TO INITIATE THE POWER OF THE BLUE SUN.

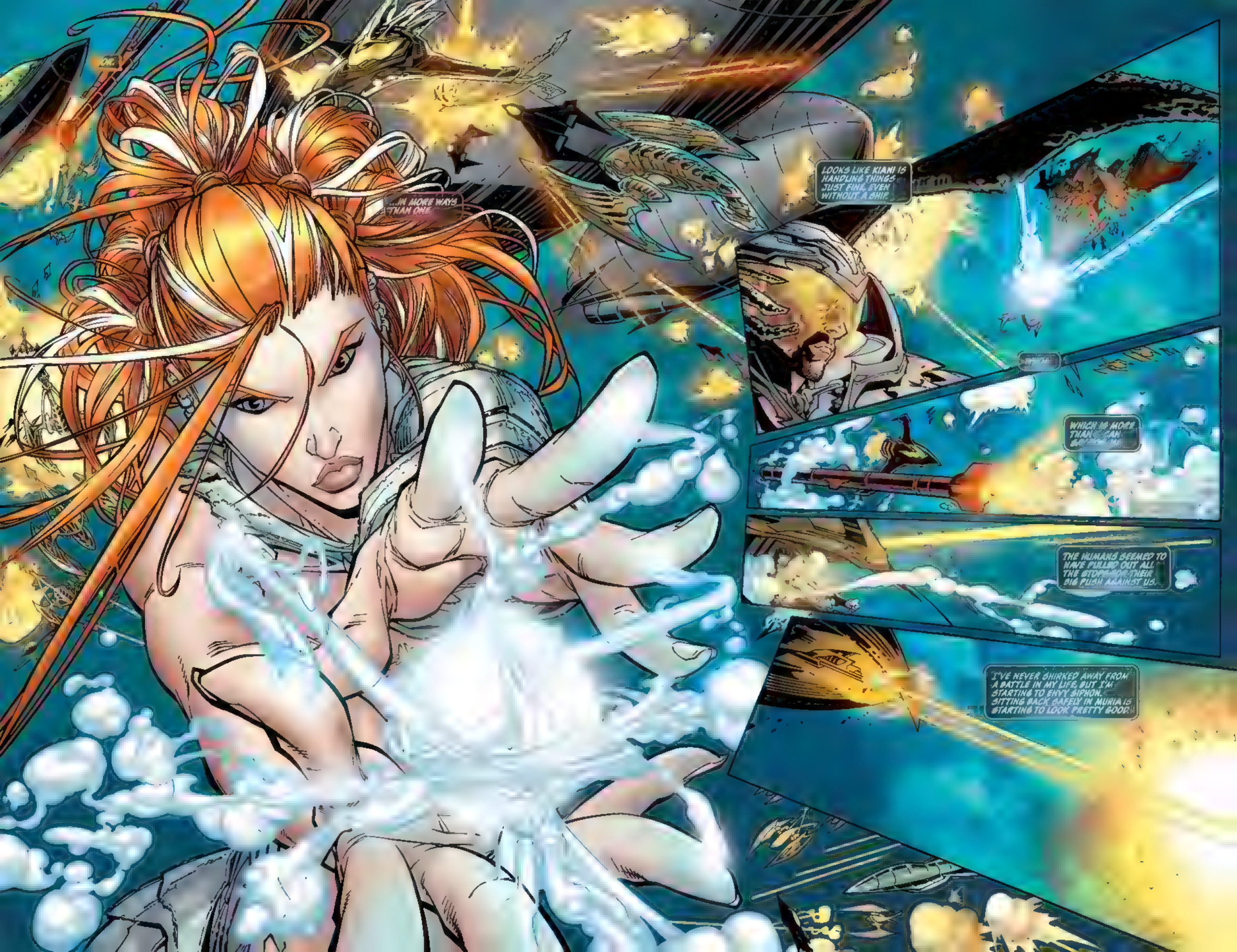


NOW THOUGH... I FIND MYSELF WONDERING IF I MADE THE RIGHT DECISION BACK THEN. THE SITUATION WITH THE HUMANS HAS RECENTLY DETERIORATED. WE HAVE BEEN HUNTED AND KILLED, KIDNAPPED AND TORTURED...

OUR ENTIRE WAY OF LIFE HAS BEEN PLACED IN DANGER.

WERE YOU RIGHT, KILLIAN? OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER WAS NO MATCH FOR THE BURDENS OF THE WORLD. BUT YOU ALWAYS HELD FIRM IN YOUR BELIEFS AND YOUR GOALS. I WAS THE ONE WHO LIED TO YOU.

I WAS THE ONE WHO BETRAYED YOU.



...IN MORE WAYS
THAN ONE.

LOOKS LIKE KIANA IS
HANDLING THINGS
JUST FINE, EVEN
WITHOUT A SHIP.

WHICH IS MORE
THAN CAN
BE SAID.

THE HUMANS SEEMED TO
HAVE PULLED OUT ALL
THE STOPPERS FOR THEIR
BIG PUSH AGAINST US.

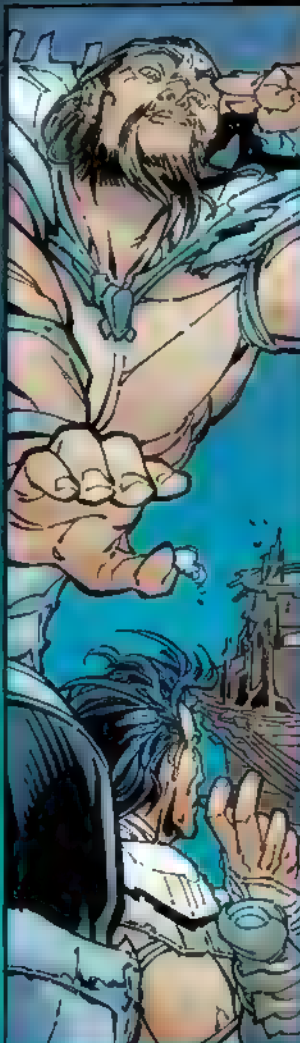
I'VE NEVER SHIRKED AWAY FROM
A BATTLE IN MY LIFE, BUT I'M
STARTING TO ENVY SIPHON.
SITTING BACK SAFELY IN MURIA IS
STARTING TO LOOK PRETTY GOOD.

MURIA.

THEY HAVE TO BE
AROUND HERE
SOMEWHERE.

WITH MOST OF OUR FORCES
RESPONDING TO THE ATTACK
ON DOR, IT DOESN'T LEAVE
MUCH BEHIND TO HANDLE THE
HUMAN THREAT HERE IN
MURIA. WE'VE GOT TO
BACK UP. WE WOULD
BE USELESS AT THIS TIME.

BESIDES, THE
SITUATION UP THERE
IS JUST AS CRITICAL.



'NO, THIS IS
UP TO US.

CAN'T RISK JUST
OPENING FIRE. IF WE
HIT THE WARHEAD, IT
COULD EXTERMINATE.

ONE THING IS PRETTY
CLEAR THOUGH. THIS
LOOKS TO BE A SUICIDE
MISSION FOR THEM.
WHICH MEANS WE HAVE
TO DO SOMETHING
BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
IT...

...I THOUGHT
I'D LOST MY
NECKLACE
FOREVER.

I WAS SWIMMING
THROUGH *CHANARNAY*
AND JUST HAPPENED TO
SEE IT RESTING AMONG THE
ROCKS... SHINING LIKE THE
TREASURE THAT IT IS.

CHANARNAY?

ISN'T THAT
WHERE YOU
LOST IT?

IT FEELS GOOD
TO HAVE THIS BACK
WHERE IT BELONGS.

YES... WITH
YOU BACK WHERE
YOU BELONG.

I'M SORRY... I
DIDN'T MEAN--

HOW CAN I DO
THIS? HOW CAN I
CHOOSE SIDES?

I KNOW THIS MUST
BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU,
ASPEN. YOU WERE BORN
AMONG US, BUT YOU WERE
RAISED AMONG THEM.

BUT YOU CANNOT
CHANGE THE FACT THAT THE
HUMANS SEE US AS A MAJOR
THREAT AND FEEL THEY MUST
DESTROY US IN ORDER
TO SURVIVE.

IF IT HELPS, DO NOT THINK
OF IT AS SIDING WITH US IN SOME
GREAT WAR AGAINST THE HUMAN
WORLD. THINK OF IT AS *HELPING* US
DEFEND THE LAST REMNANT OF OUR
WORLD AGAINST THIS INVASION.

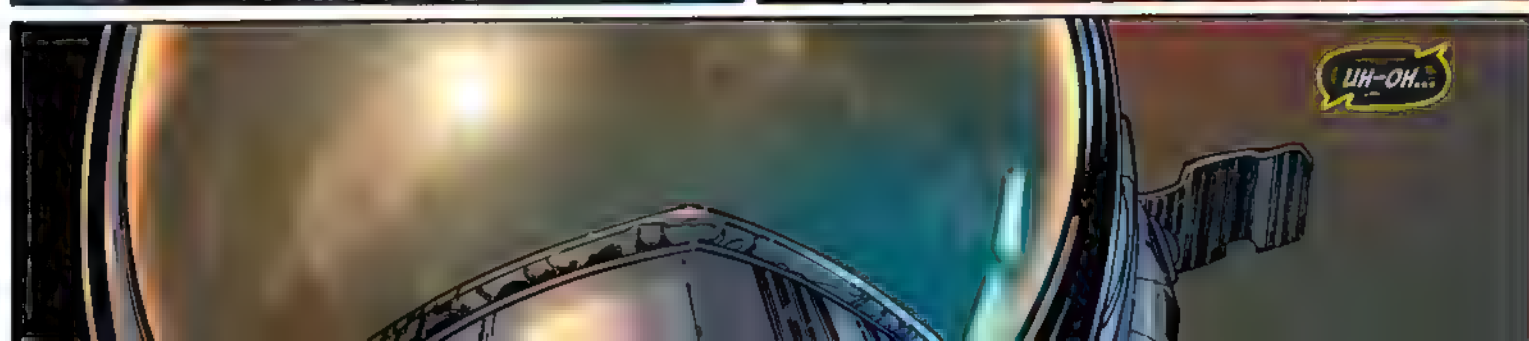
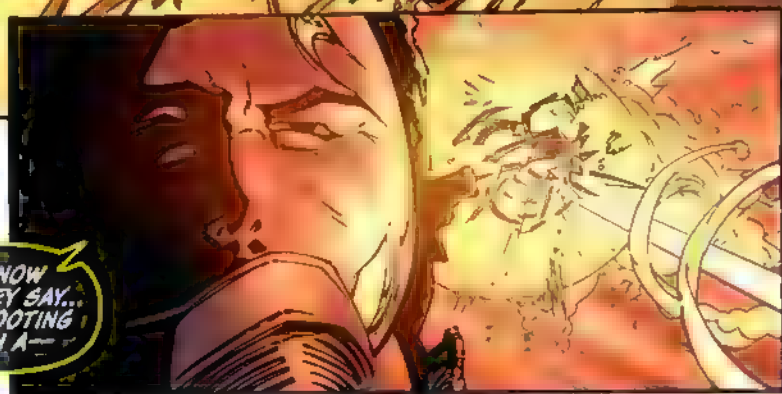
BECAUSE
THAT'S WHAT THIS
IS, *ASPEN*... AN
INVASION.

IT'S TIME.

YOU READY?

YEAH, BUT
WHAT WERE YOU
DOING THERE?

IT JUST SEEMS
TO BE ONE OF THOSE
PLACES WHERE I FEEL
COMFORTABLE THESE DAYS.
IT'S... I DON'T KNOW...
SACRED IT REMINDS ME
OF WHO *WE* ARE.





...WE HAVE A PROBLEM.



I CAN'T BLAME
CANNON AND THE
OTHERS FOR
THEIR ACTIONS.

THEY ARE JUST
DEFENDING
THEMSELVES.

PUT THAT ALSO DOESN'T
MEAN THAT I HAVE TO
USE THEIR SAME TACTICS.

HAVE TO BE CAREFUL. DON'T
WANT TO RUPTURE THEIR
HULLS. JUST WANT TO PUT
THEM OUT OF COMMISSION.

NICE TO SEE CANNON
BROUGHT SOME HELP WITH
HIM, BUT LITTLE MISS SAVIOR
ISN'T DOING MUCH MORE THAN
SLAPPING THEIR WRISTS.

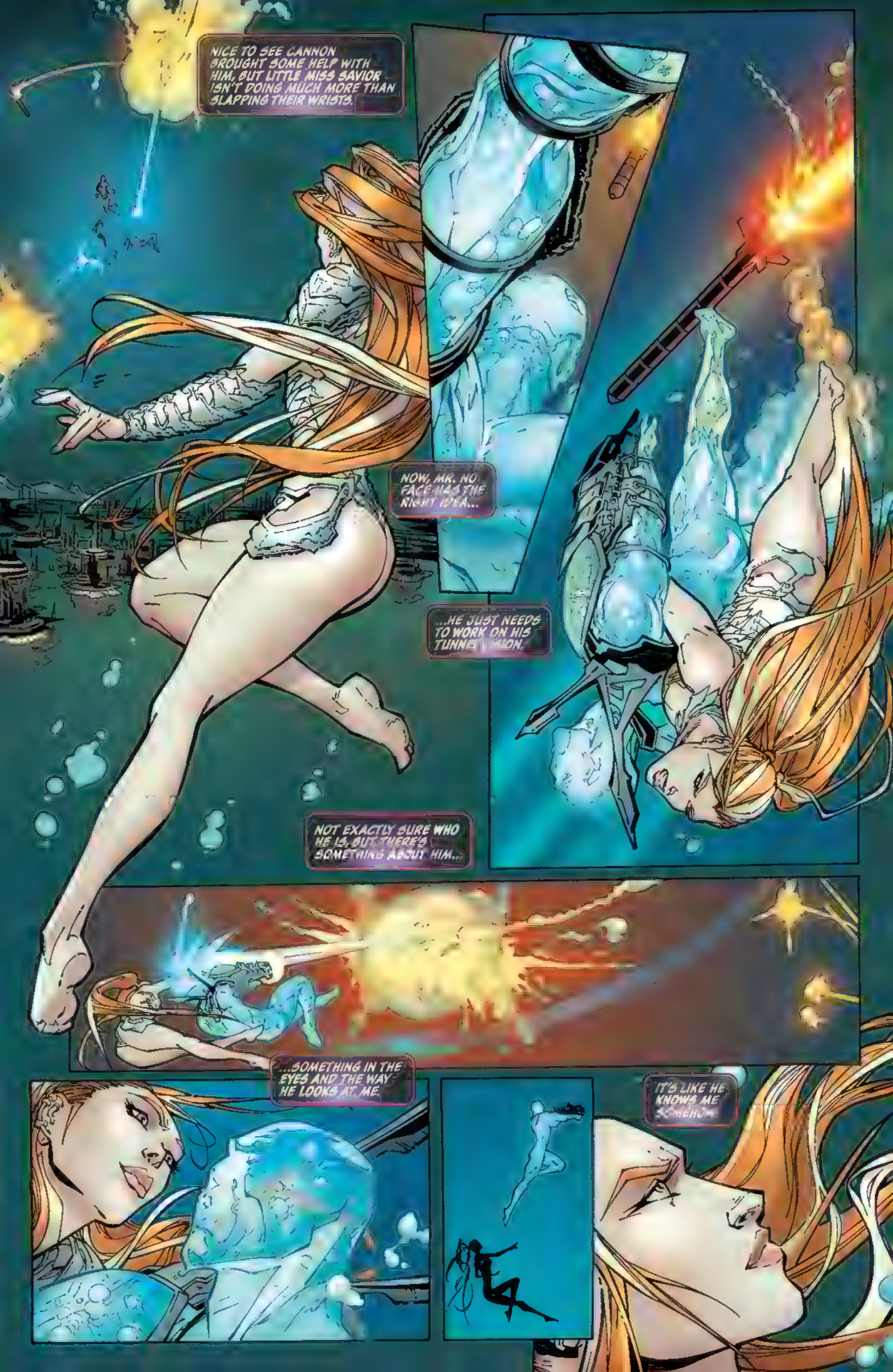
NOW, MR. NO
FACE HAS THE
RIGHT IDEA...

...HE JUST NEEDS
TO WORK ON HIS
TUNNEL VISION.

NOT EXACTLY SURE WHO
HE IS, BUT THERE'S
SOMETHING ABOUT HIM...

...SOMETHING IN THE
EYES AND THE WAY
HE LOOKS AT ME.

IT'S LIKE HE
KNOWS ME
SOMEHOW.



...MAYLANDER IS
DEFINITELY PLAYING
FOR KEEPS

ANDERSON!

GET HIM!

THIS CITY SHALL
NOT FALL

BUT THE GAME
CANNOT BE
SAID TO YOU.

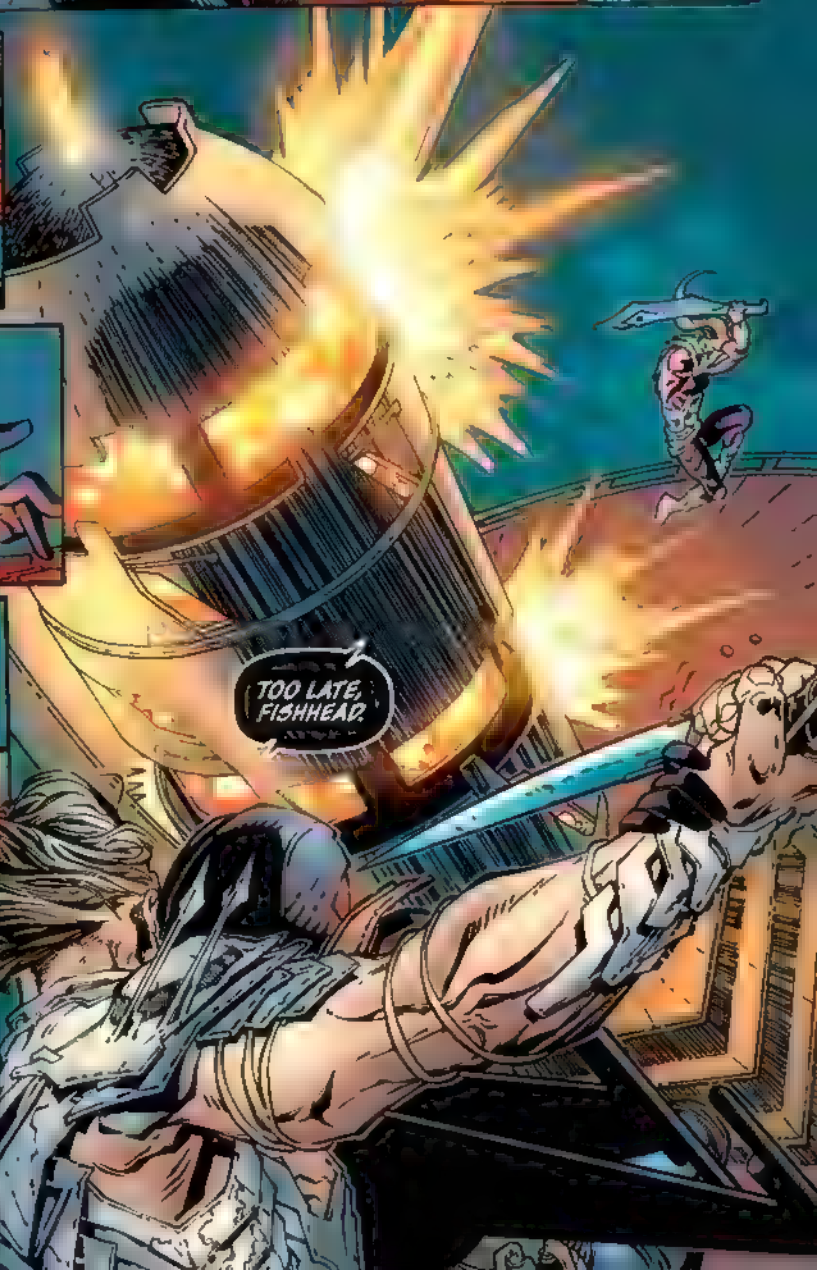
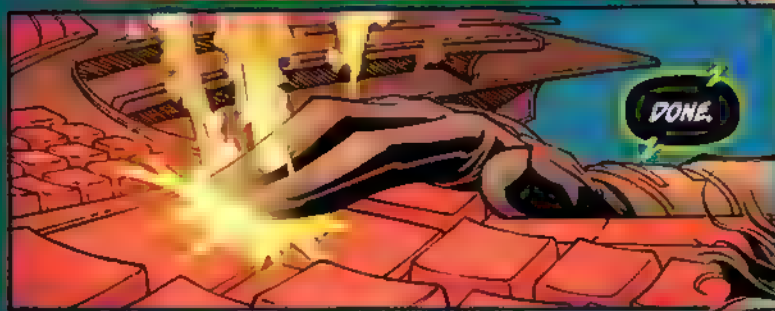
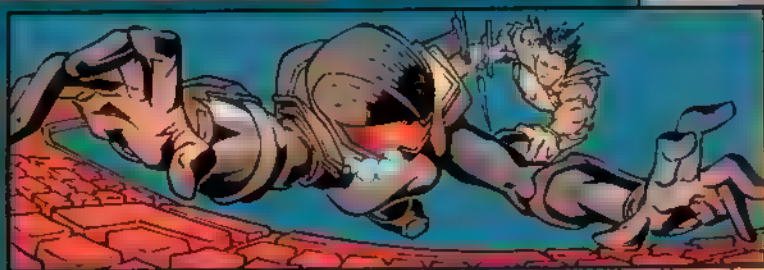
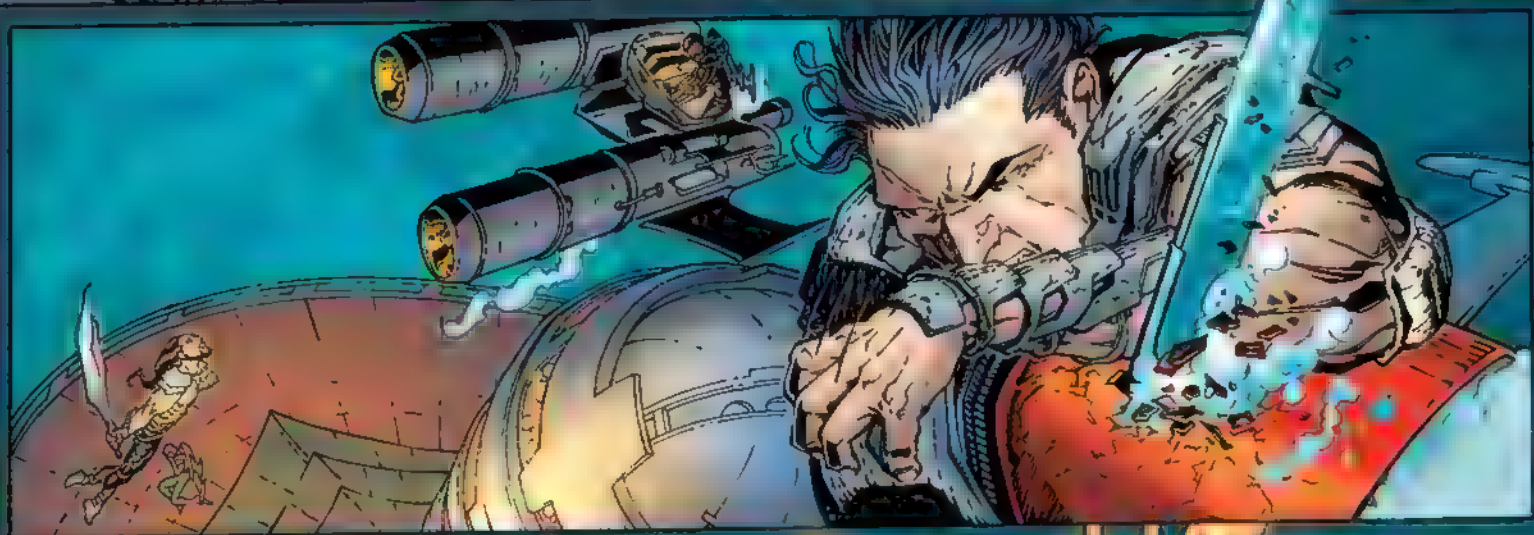
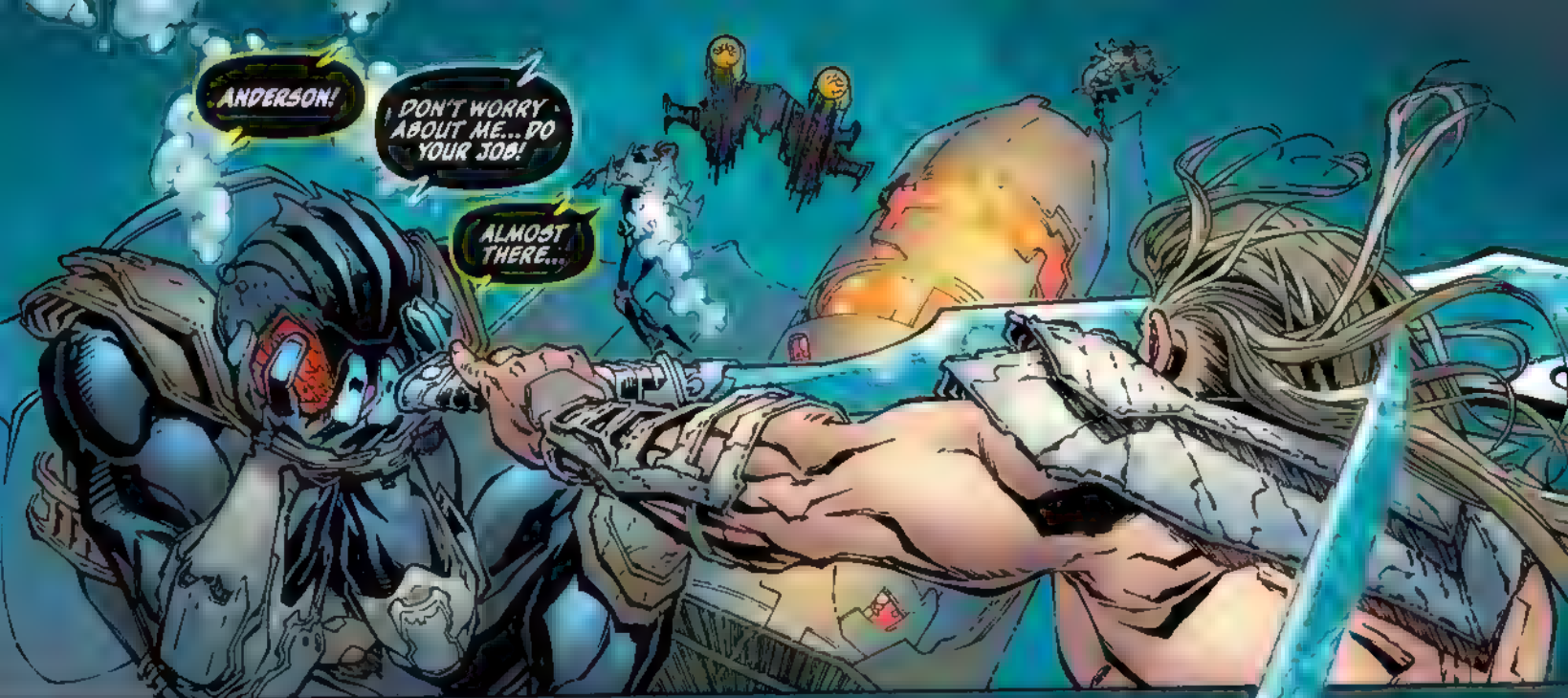




INCOMING!

WATCH YOUR BACK ANDERSON!

CARTER, HURRY UP!



THEY ARE MUCH MORE POWERFUL THAN
EVEN I HAD ANTICIPATED. CANNON ALONE
HAS WIPED THROUGH DOZENS OF SHIPS.
THIS IS OUR ONLY SHOT AT PRESERVING
OUR WORLD FROM THIS THREAT.

EVERYTHING IS GOING AS PLANNED,
BUT WE ARE RUNNING OUT OF
TIME. OUR FIGHTERS CANNOT
COMPETE WITH THEIR FORCES.

ADMIRAL...

WE'RE PICKING
UP AN ACTIVATION
SIGNAL FROM THE
PRIMARY TARGET.

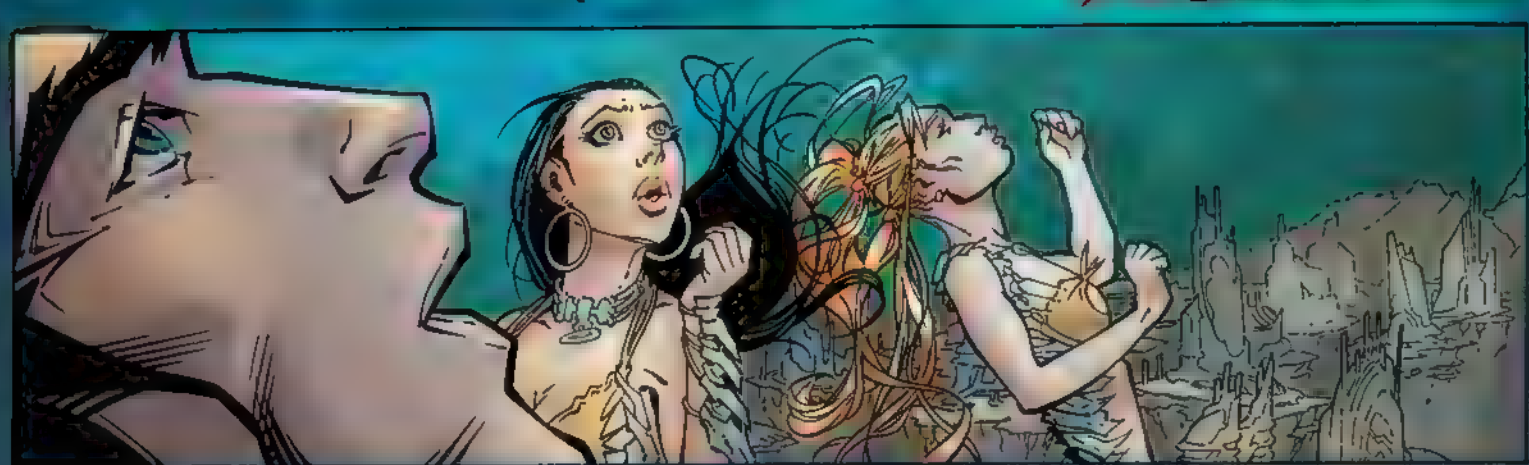
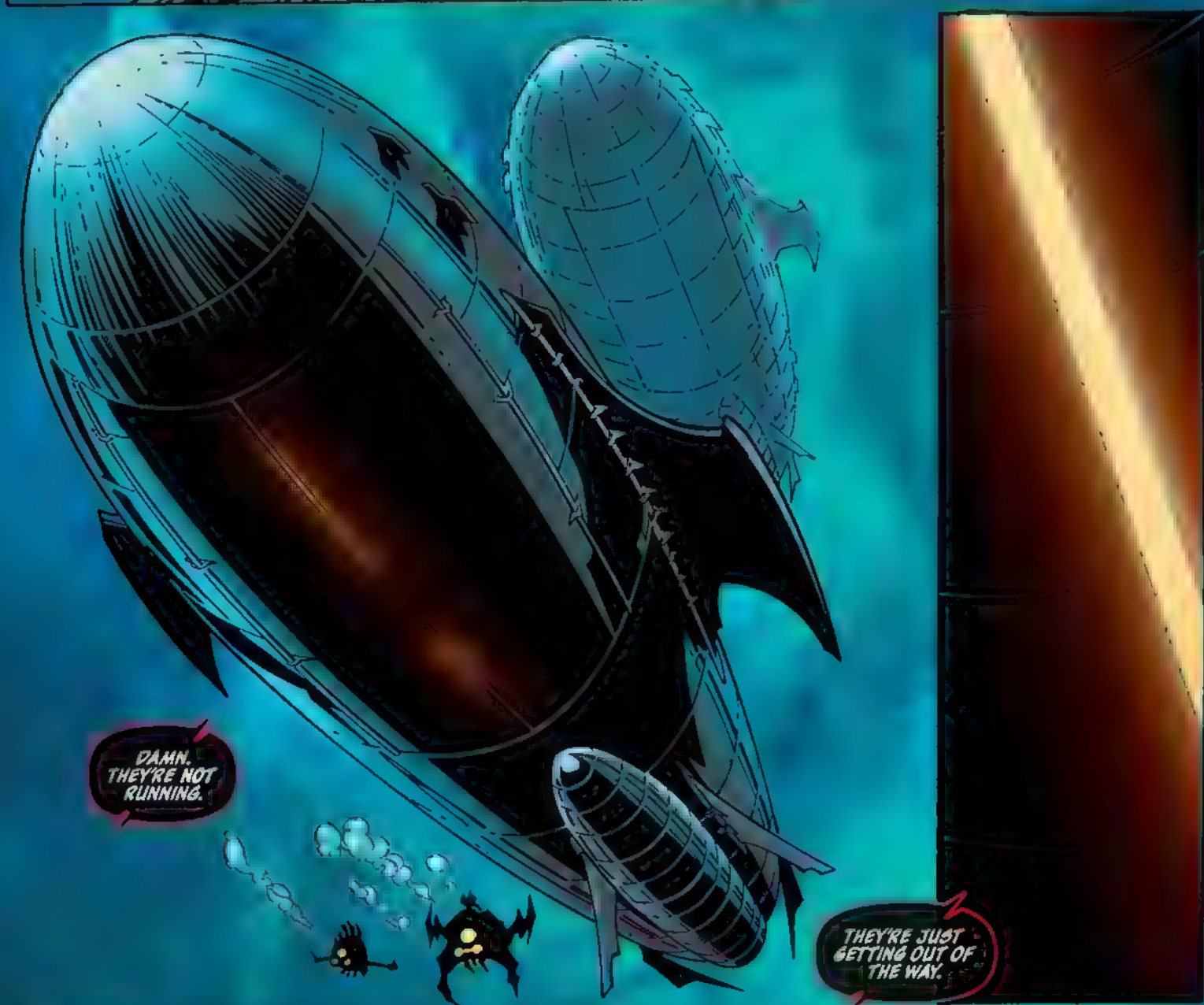
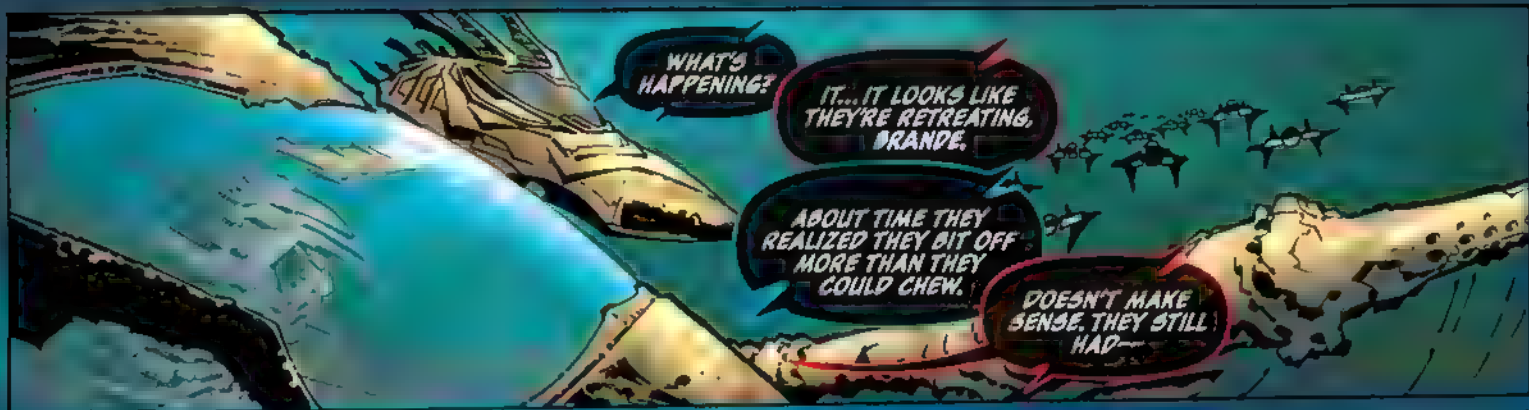
CONFIRM
SIGNAL.

CONFIRMED.

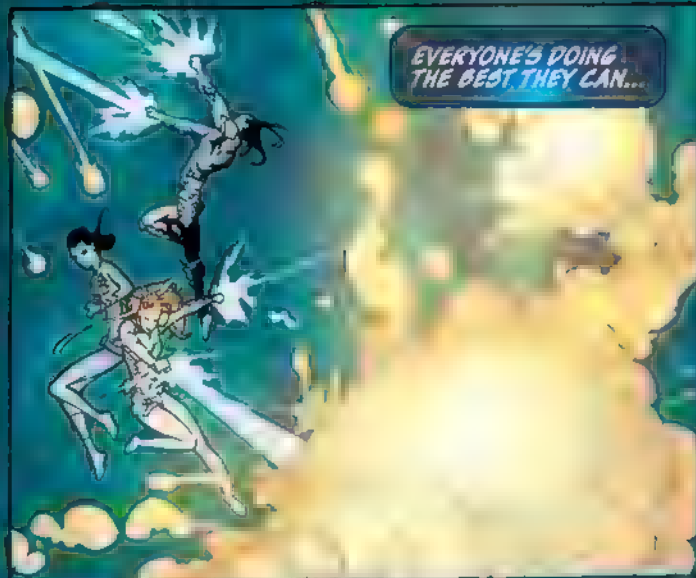
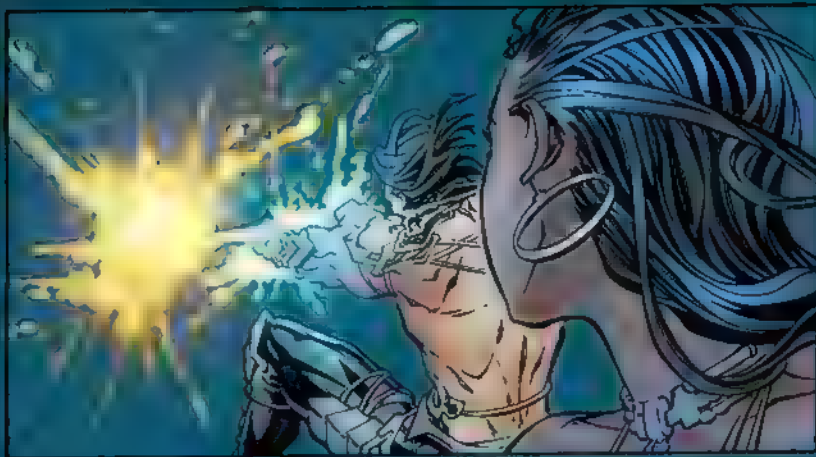
THE
WARHEAD HAS
BEEN ARMED,
SIR.

READY TO ENGAGE
EXIT STRATEGY. RETREAT
FIGHTERS TO RENDEZVOUS
POINT. MOVE INTO POSITION
FOR FINAL ASSAULT.

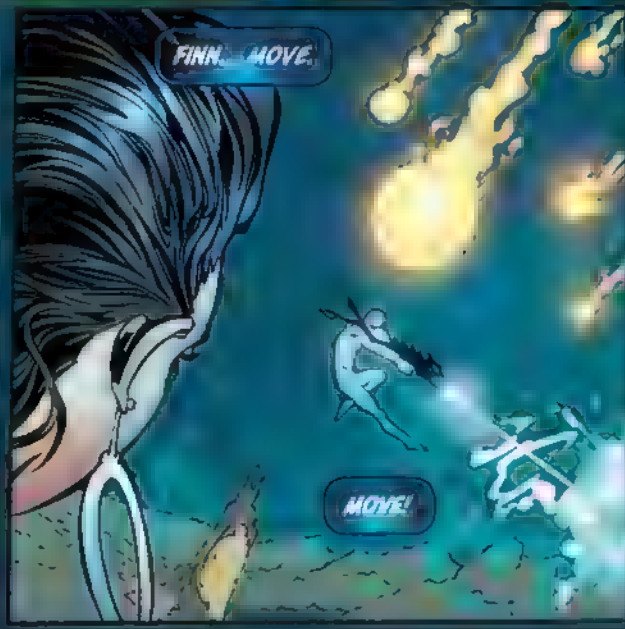
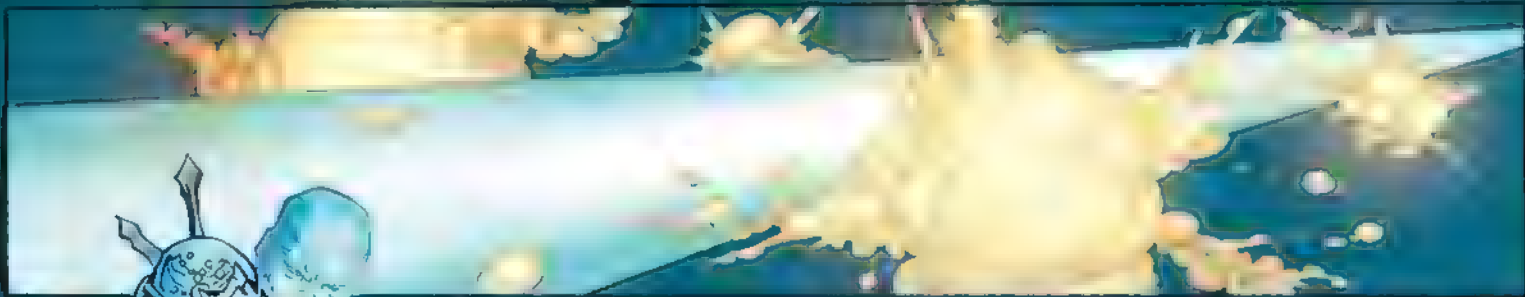
TWENTY MINUTES...
TWENTY MINUTES AND
IT WILL ALL BE OVER.







...BUT THERE ARE
SO MANY OF THEM.





NOW

FINN. COME ON,
FINN. NOT NOW...
NOT AGAIN. PLEASE
FINN, PLEASE.

I CAN'T LOSE
YOU AGAIN.

ENOUGH...
ENOUGH...

...ENOUGH!

DAMN YOU, MAYLANDER.
YOU THINK WE'RE A
THREAT. YOU THINK
WE'RE YOUR ENEMIES.

GO BE IT.

CONSIDER US
DWARFING.

To be
CONCLUDED.

ASPEN
Vol. 2

#11
OF 11
COVER A

MICHAEL TURNER'S
FATHOM



VOLUME TWO
Issue Eleven of Eleven

FATHOM

J.T. KRUL & MICHAEL TURNER
story

KOI TURNBULL & MARCUS TO
pencils

SAL REGLA
DON HO
& JEFF DE LOS SANTOS
inks

DAVID MORÁN
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DREAMER DESIGN
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HHHHHAAAAARRRRR
TINK TINK TINK
TINK

THE HULL IS
STRESSING FROM
THE WATER
PRESSURE.

IT DOESN'T
MAKE ANY SENSE,
CAPTAIN. WE'RE ONLY
AT NINE HUNDRED
FEET.

IT MAKES
PERFECT SENSE.
WE'RE UNDER
ATTACK.

NOW THAT YOU'VE DESTROYED
A CITY AND KILLED HUNDREDS
AND MAYBE EVEN THOUSANDS
OF THESE PEOPLE, YOU'RE
JUST GOING TO CALL IT A DAY
AND GO HOME?

YOU THINK YOU CAN JUST
WALK AWAY AFTER WHAT
YOU'VE DONE?

THINK AGAIN.

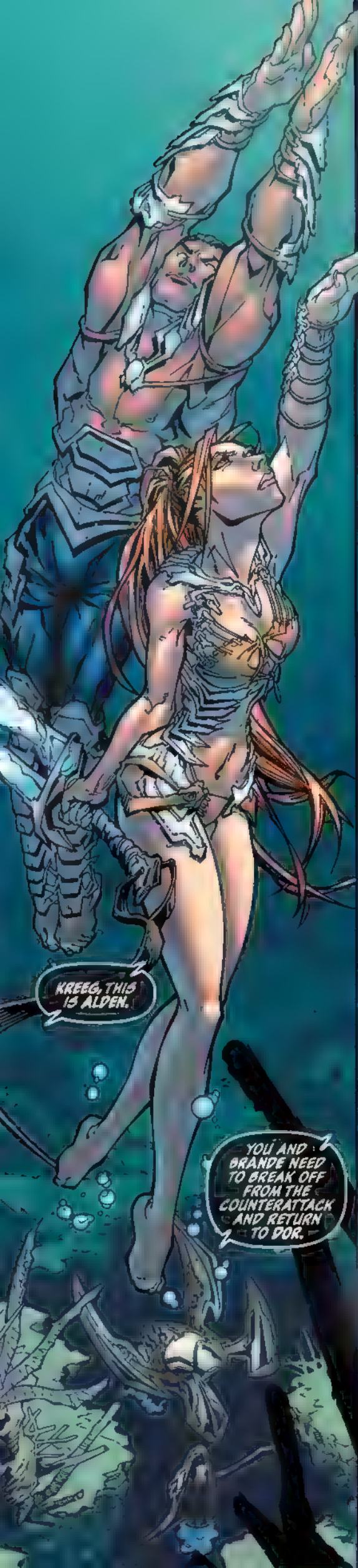
THE HULL'S
FRACTURING.
GET US TO THE
SURFACE, NOW.

EMERGENCY
BLOW!

YOU NEED TO
LEARN THIS ONCE
AND FOR ALL...



THE OCEANS DON'T
BELONG TO YOU.



THE HUMANS
MANAGED TO GET
A NUCLEAR WARHEAD
INTO MURIA. WE MUST
GET IT BEYOND
RANGE BEFORE IT
DETONATES.

A WARHEAD...?

WHERE IS
IT NOW?

YOU ARE TO
RENDEZVOUS WITH
SIPHON AT DOR'S
DEACTIVATED
HYDROPORT.

SIPHON?

YES. HE'S
BRINGING THE
WARHEAD TO
YOU.

DAMN YOU,
SIPHON... WHAT
THE HELL WERE
YOU THINKING?

WHAT THE HELL
WAS I THINKING?

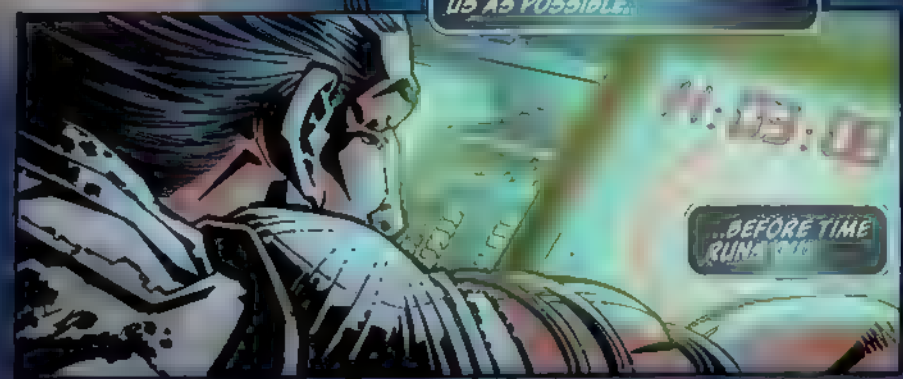
I SHOULD HAVE TAKEN
THALASSAR UP ON HIS OFFER
TO GET THIS THING AWAY FROM
MURIA. BUT I COULDN'T PLACE
HIM IN GREATER JEOPARDY
WHILE I WAS BACK DOING
NOTHING.

KREEG, THIS
IS ALDEN.

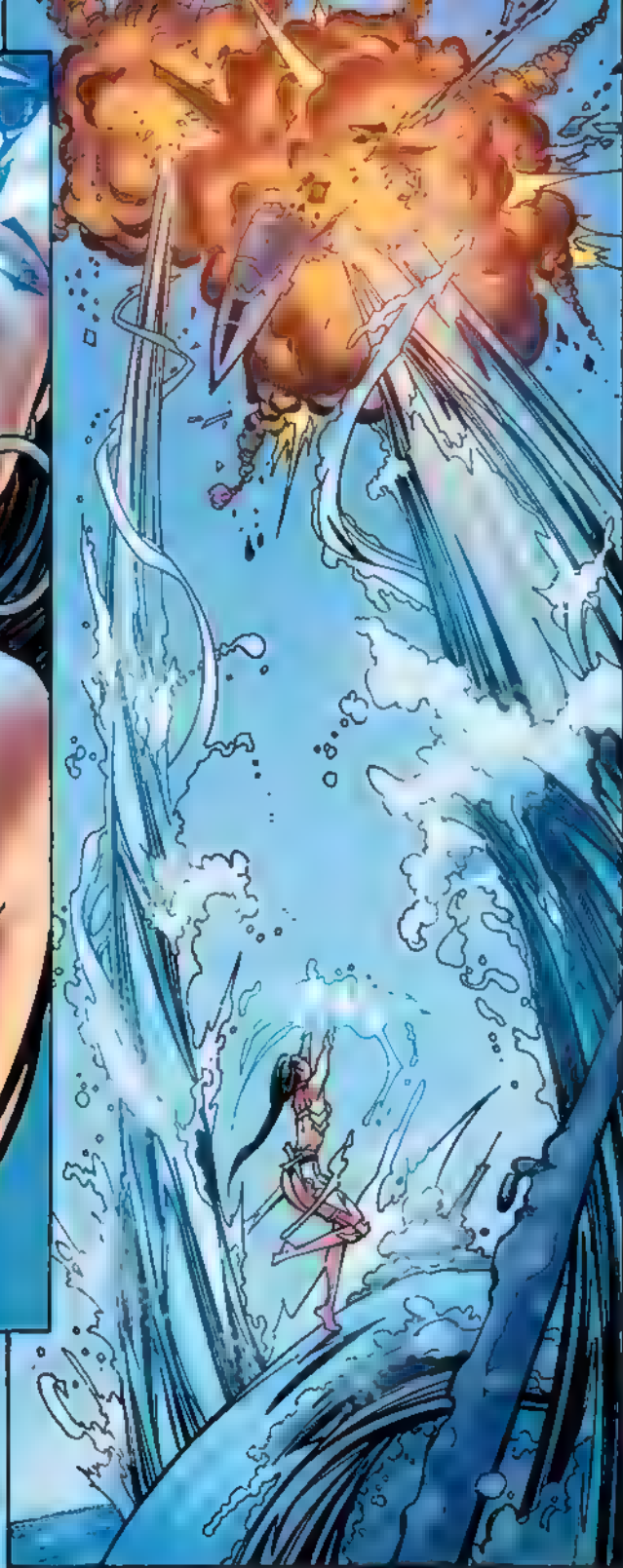
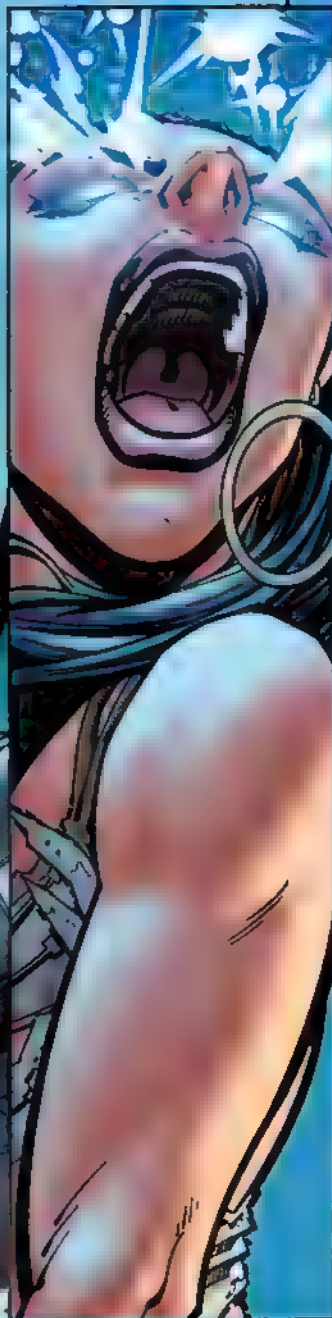
YOU AND
BRANDE NEED
TO BREAK OFF
FROM THE
COUNTERATTACK
AND RETURN
TO DOR.



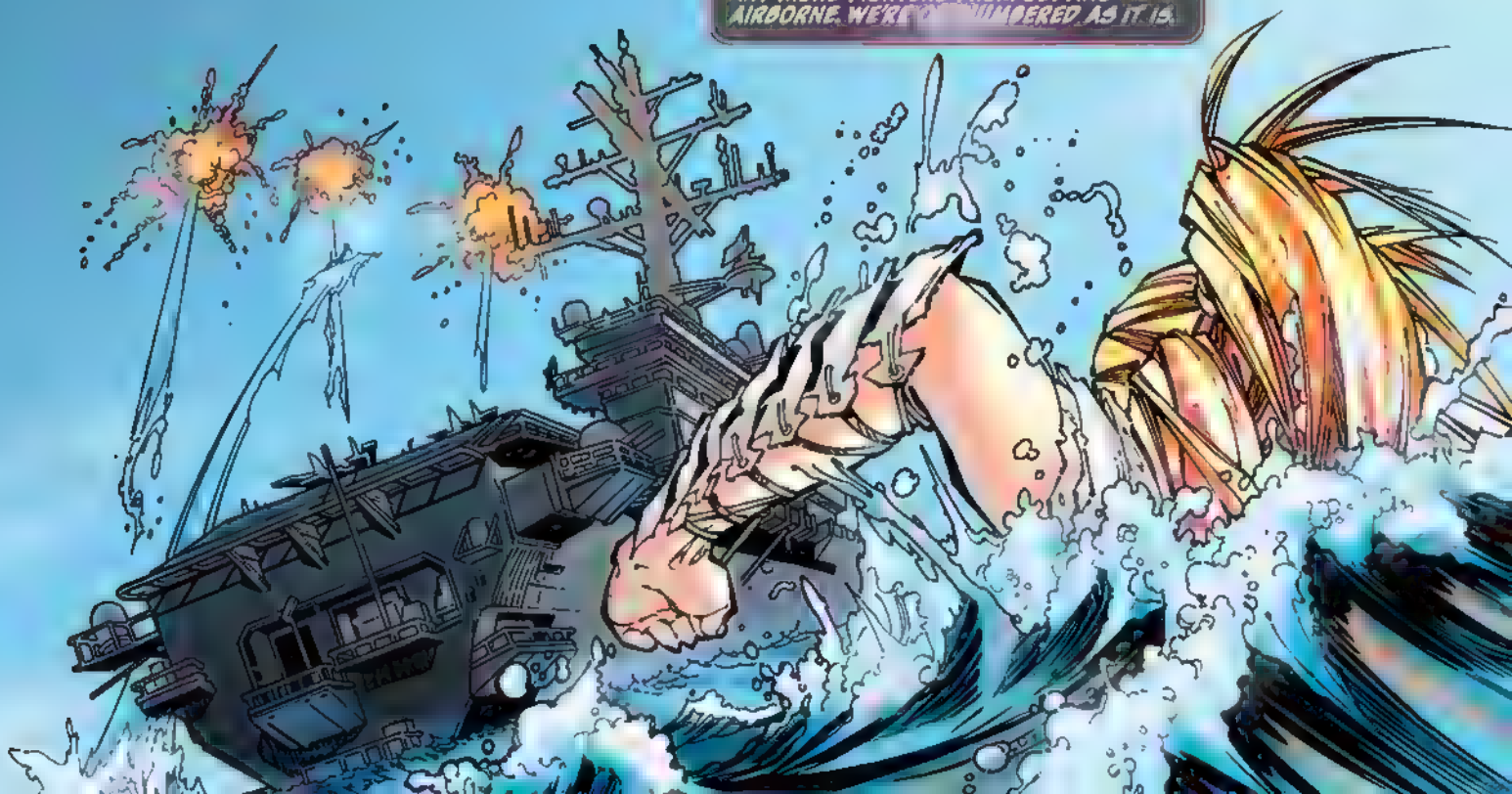
I CAN ONLY GUESS WHAT THE
MAGNITUDE OF THIS WARHEAD'S
BLAST WOULD BE. OUR ONLY
HOPE IS TO USE THE HYDROPORT
SYSTEM TO GET IT AS FAR FROM
US AS POSSIBLE.



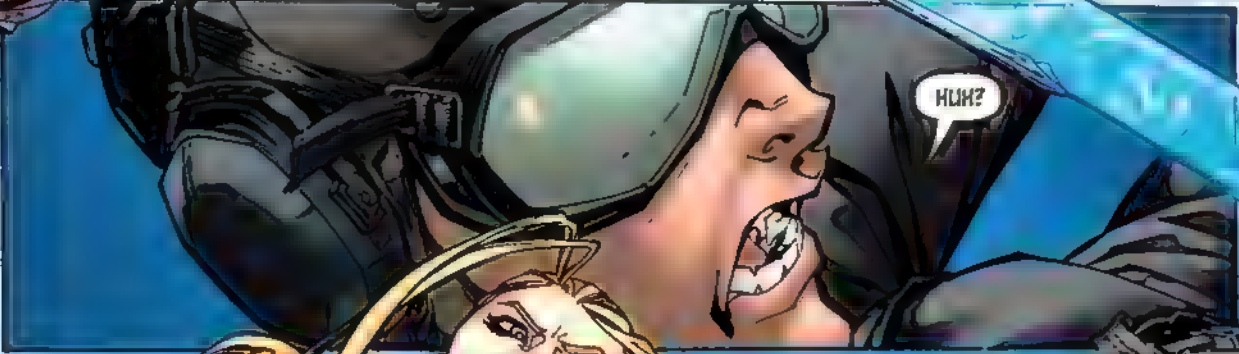
...BEFORE TIME
RUNS OUT.



ASPEN'S FINALLY A USEFUL PART OF THIS FIGHT, ABOUT TIME. BUT, I'VE GOT TO KEEP ANY MORE FIGHTERS FROM GETTING AIRBORNE. WE'RE NUMBERED, AS IT IS.



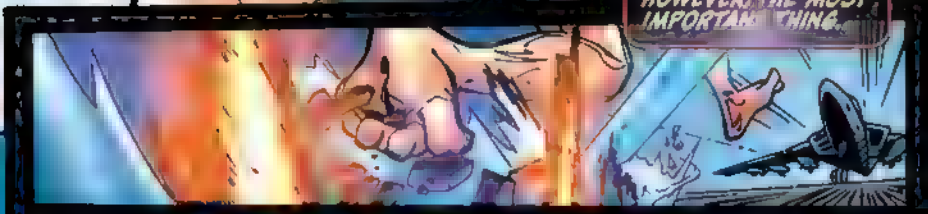
DURING MY TRAINING, CASQUE OFTEN PREACHED THAT STRENGTH WAS NOT THE KEY TO WINNING ANY...



BUT, THAT SURE FELT GOOD.



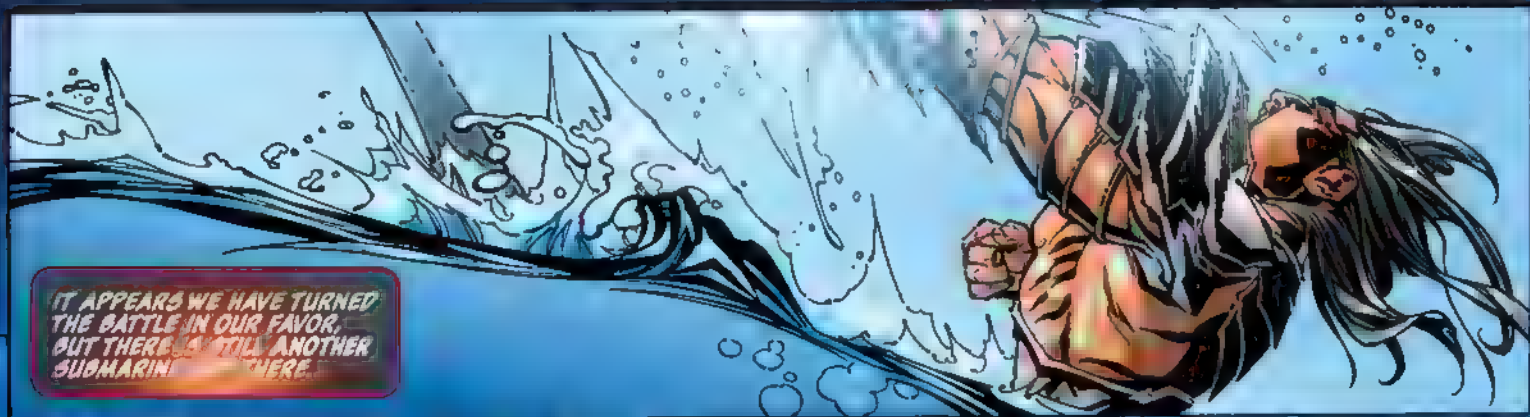
HOWEVER, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING...



WAS TO UNDERSTAND YOUR OPPONENT'S WEAKNESSES...

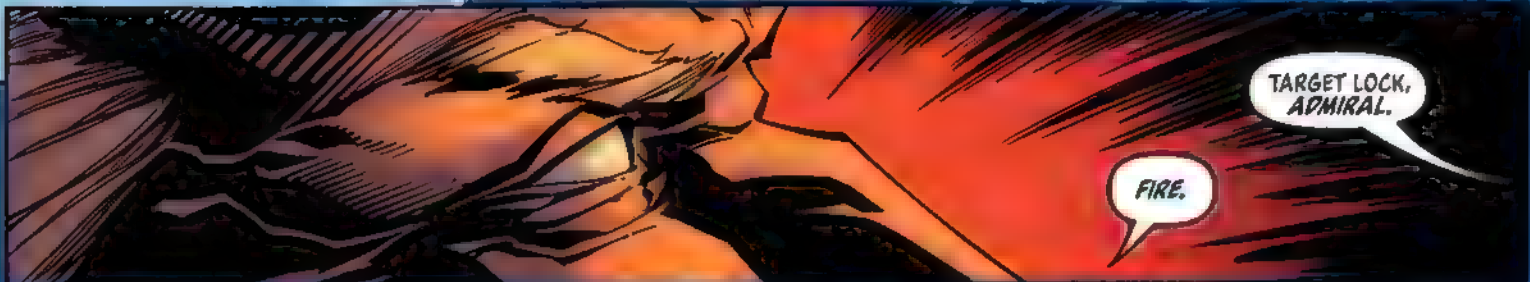
...AND EXPLOIT IT.





IT APPEARS WE HAVE TURNED
THE BATTLE IN OUR FAVOR,
BUT THERE IS STILL ANOTHER
SUBMARINE OUT THERE.

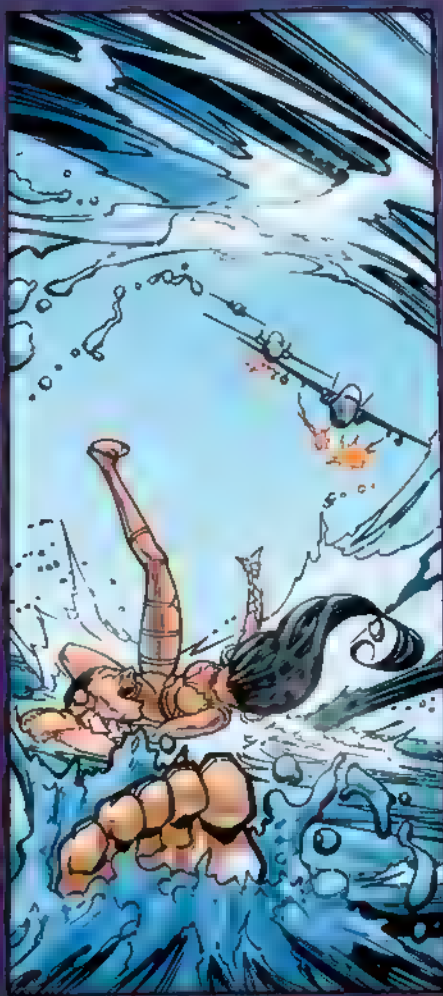
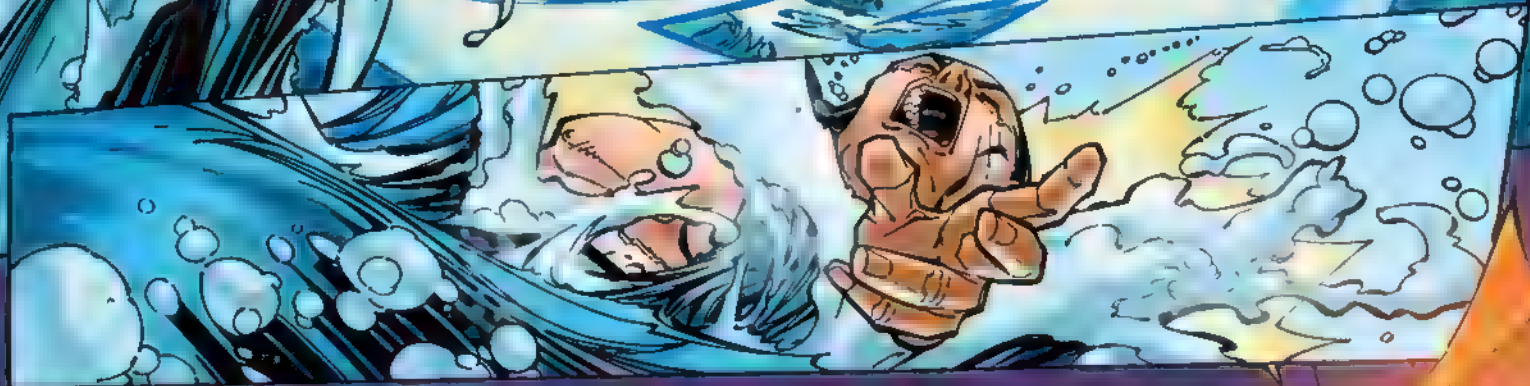
...SOMEWHERE...



TARGET LOCK,
ADMIRAL.

FIRE.







MY BROTHER WAS RIGHT. YOU
ARE NOTHING BUT AN
INVADER, MAYLANDER. AND
YOU DESERVE WHATEVER
YOU'VE GOT COMING TO YOU.

I WON'T LET YOU
HURT ANY OF
THESE PEOPLE.

NOT NOW. NOT EVER!
YOU UNDERSTAND ME,
MAYLANDER??

I DIDN'T START
THIS WAR...

...YOU DID.



BUT I'M SURE AS HELL
GOING TO FINISH IT.

INCREDIBLE. I'VE NEVER
SEEN SUCH POWER.

TAKE COVER!

THE WATERS ARE FILLED
WITH VIOLENCE BECAUSE
OF YOU, MAYLANDER, BUT
I AM GOING TO PUT AN
END TO IT.

...AND YOU.





ASPEN!
THAT'S
ENOUGH!

IT'S OVER.

NO...

...CANNON,
WHAT HAVE I
DONE?

YOU ENDED
THIS WAR.



HE'S HERE.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THIS THING? YOU SHOULDN'T BE WITHIN A HUNDRED MILES OF THE WARHEAD.

NONE OF US SHOULD, KREEG, GET THAT HYDROPORT OPEN. WE'VE ONLY GOT SEVEN MINUTES.

THEN YOU'D BETTER GET CLEAR. WE'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

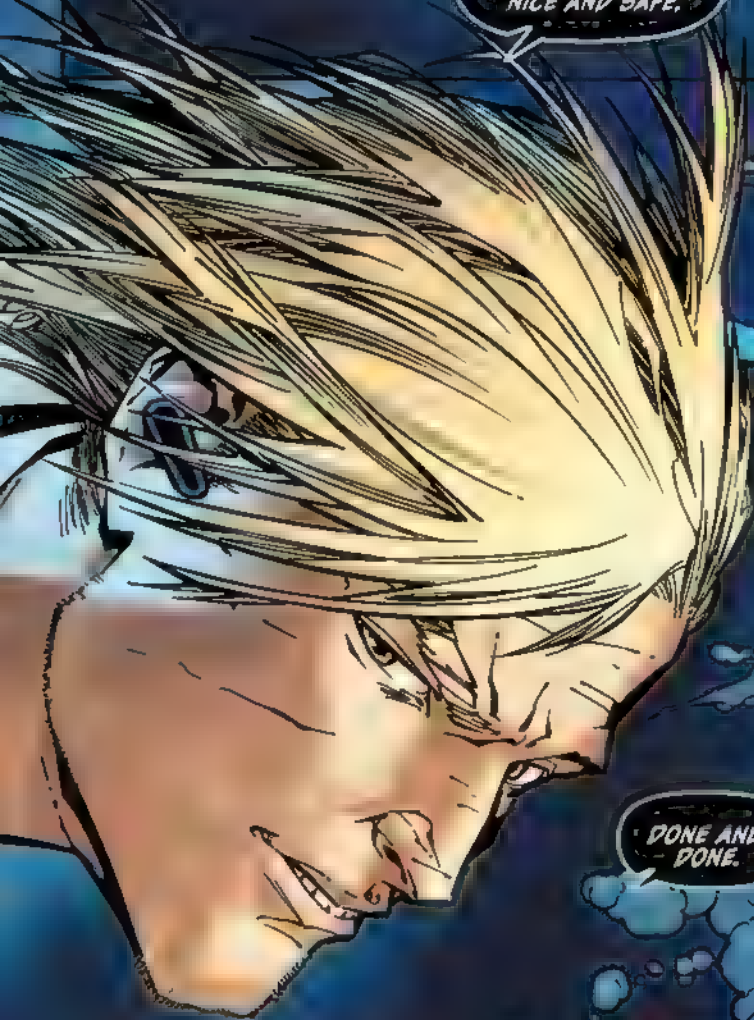


I'M NOT GOING TO SADDLE YOU WITH THIS.

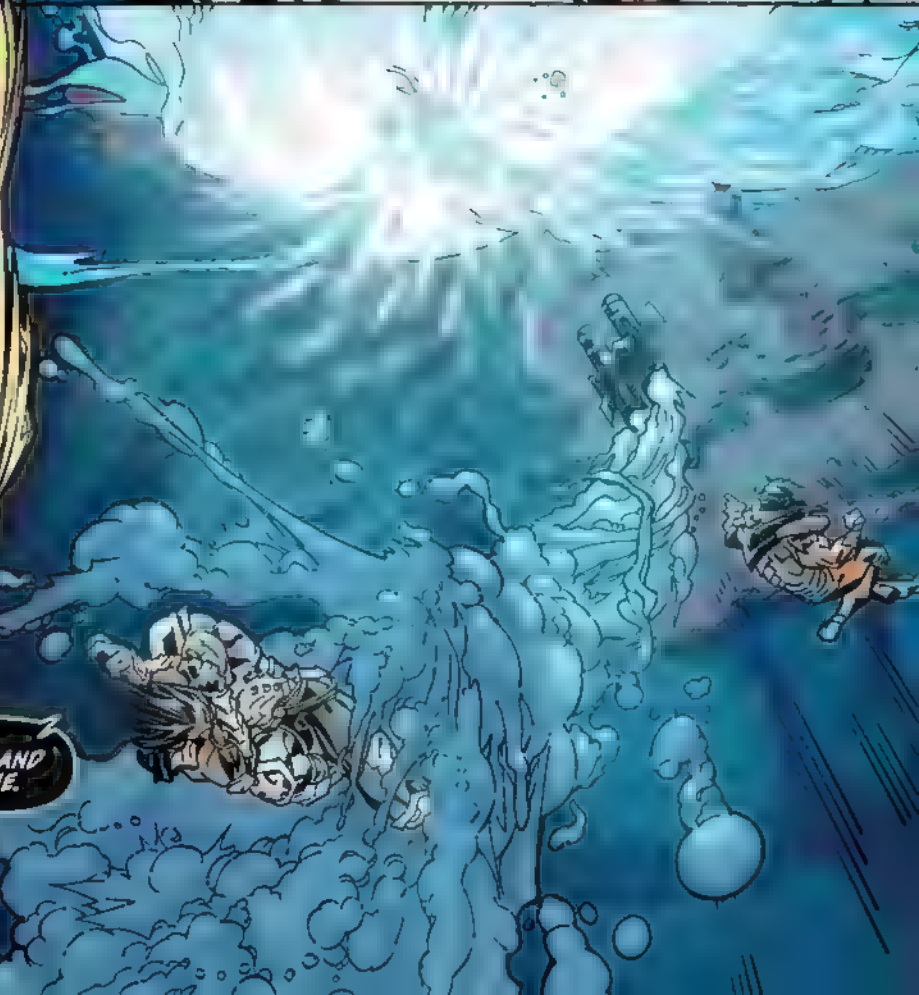
SIPHON... IT'S MY DUTY.

BESIDES, I KNOW MY WAY AROUND THE HYDROPORT SYSTEM BETTER THAN EITHER OF YOU. I KNOW JUST THE PORTAL TO SLIP THIS THROUGH... NICE AND REMOTE.

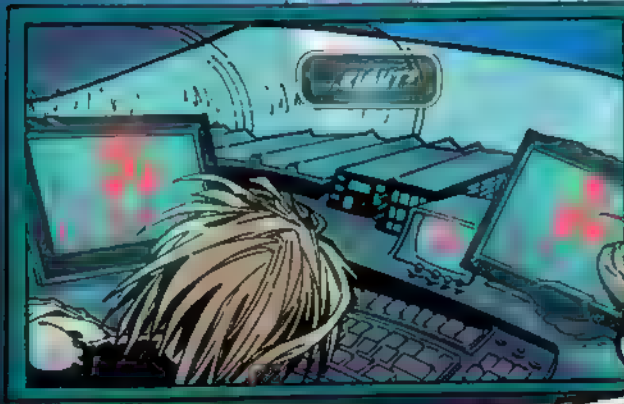
JUST DON'T FORGET TO SLIP BACK THROUGH HERE, NICE AND SAFE.



DONE AND DONE.



GOT TO MAKE THIS QUICK. ONLY HAVE FIVE MINUTES.



4:10:11

WAIT A SECOND.

3:20:18

...THE HYDROPORT ENERGY MUST BE DISRUPTING THE WARHEAD'S INTERNAL CLOCK.

02:45:10

I'M OUT OF TIME

01:38:09

00:28:29

00:00:01

00:00:00

SOMETHING'S WRONG





REPORT.

SONAR IS CLEAR, ADMIRAL. NO EVIDENCE OF DETONATION. IT'S POSSIBLE THE SHOCKWAVE READING IS HAMPERED BY THE DEPTH OF THE BLAST. WE'RE CONTINUING MONITORING.

FORGET IT...

...WE'RE FINISHED HERE.

HOW COULD I?

I WASN'T DEFENDING MYSELF OR PROTECTING ANYBODY ELSE. THEY WERE RETREATING. THIS WAS NOTHING BUT PAYBACK, PURE AND SIMPLE.

I'D RATHER NOT.

I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE BEING PRAISED FOR ANYTHING I DID TODAY.

BUT THE HUMANS ARE MY PEOPLE TOO, CANNON!

STILL BEATING YOURSELF UP?

NO, I'M JUST TRYING TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT HAPPENED HERE. PEOPLE ARE DEAD BECAUSE OF ME.

YES, BUT PEOPLE ARE ALSO ALIVE BECAUSE OF YOU. YOUR PEOPLE, ASPEN.

MAYBE YOU SHOULD COME BACK TO MURIA WITH ME AND DWELL FOR JUST A MOMENT ON THE GOOD THAT YOU'VE DONE. I KNOW THERE ARE MANY WHO WILL WANT TO THANK YOU PERSONALLY.



THIS ASSAULT
ON OUR CITIES WAS
THE GRAVEST THREAT
WE'VE FACED IN MANY
YEARS, AND IT IS BECAUSE
OF OUR STRENGTH AND
RESOLVE THAT WE ARE
EVEN ABLE TO GATHER
HERE TODAY.

BUT ANY JOY
WE MAY FEEL NOW IS
TEMPERED BY THE
SORROW OVER THOSE WHO
GAVE THEIR LIVES SO THAT
WE MIGHT CONTINUE
OURS.

LOST TO US
ARE FATHERS AND
MOTHERS, SONS AND
DAUGHTERS, BROTHERS
AND SISTERS, FRIENDS
AND COMRADES.

AND THEIR
SACRIFICE SHOULD BE
REMEMBERED AS LONG
AS WE AS A PEOPLE
ENDURE.



SOME MAY
ARGUE THAT THIS WAS
A GREAT TEST FOR US. A
TEST OF OUR COURAGE...
OF OUR METTLE... OF OUR
VERY SPIRITS.

BUT I SAY THAT
THE REAL TEST LIES
AHEAD OF US. IT'S HOW
WE CARRY ON IN THE DAYS
TO COME THAT WILL TRULY
SHOW JUST WHO WE ARE
AND WHAT OUR FUTURE
HOLDS IN STORE.



DO YOU REALLY
THINK YOU SHOULD
RETURN TO SABA?
WHAT IF THE HUMANS
COME BACK?

I'LL NOT BE
CAUGHT OFF-GUARD
AGAIN. THAT I CAN
ASSURE YOU.

I WISH
YOU'D RECONSIDER,
THALASSAR. MURIA AND
ITS PEOPLE ARE SHELL-
SHOCKED, AND THEY'LL
NEED STRONG LEADERSHIP
TO FIND THEIR PLACE
AGAIN.

SABA IS MY
HOME. IT ALWAYS
HAS BEEN AND
ALWAYS WILL BE.

AS FOR MURIA, IF YOU
ASK ME, IT ALREADY
HAS THE LEADERSHIP IT
NEEDS TO RETURN TO
GREATNESS.

BESIDES, IF
YOU SCREW UP,
CANNON WILL BE HERE
TO KNOCK YOU BACK
INTO SHAPE. RIGHT,
CANNON?

ABSOLUTELY.
THAT'S WHAT
I DO.

DEAR KIANI.



YOU STAND BEHIND THAT
STERN EXPRESSION LIKE IT
IS YOUR BATTLE ARMOR,
MASKING SUCH A TORTURED
SOUL HIDING UNDERNEATH.

IT DOESN'T SEEM FAIR THAT ONE
WHO GIVES SO MUCH OF HERSELF
TO THE PEOPLE OF MURIA SHOULD
BE KEPT IN THE DARK AS TO THE
TRUTH ABOUT HER PAST.



OCEAN FLOOR.



INTERESTINGLY, ABOUT
SINGLES, THE LUGER
SEEMED TO BE
HATRED FOR
THE
TO THE



BECAUSE THE RAID
WILL BE
POWER
AND
THE

WILD

THE



MAN, I WISH I COULD HAVE BEEN THERE...

...TO SEE THE LOOK ON MAYLANDER'S FACE WHEN YOU GAVE HIM THE SMACKDOWN.

CAN YOU PLEASE STOP USING THAT EXPRESSION?

HERE... THIS WILL HELP TAKE THE EDGE OFF.

DAD, IT WAS AWFUL. I WAS AWFUL.

I'M SURE YOU ONLY DID WHAT YOU THOUGHT YOU HAD TO DO. IN BATTLE, THERE AREN'T ANY EASY DECISIONS, ASPEN. YOU JUST GOTTA MAKE 'EM AND MOVE ON. AND IF YOU REALLY THINK YOU MADE A MISTAKE, YOU TRY NOT TO MAKE THE SAME ONE AGAIN. THAT'S ALL ANYONE CAN HOPE TO DO.

AND BEING THE GUY WHO WAS UNTIL RECENTLY DOPED UP IN THE *MOJAVE DESERT*, I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT I'M GLAD YOU DID STAND UP TO MAYLANDER.

KNOWING THAT YOU ARE BOTH SAFE IS THE *ONLY* THING THAT MAKES THIS ANY EASIER.

SEEMS SO
PEACEFUL ON THE
SURFACE DOESN'T IT?
YOU'D NEVER KNOW ALL
THE CHAOS CHURNING
BELOW.

GOTTA BE A
LITTLE SICK OF THE
WATER RIGHT NOW,
HUH?

I'M SICK OF
JUST ABOUT
EVERYTHING
RIGHT NOW.

WHERE'S YOUR
BRO? WHAT'S HIS
NAME AGAIN?
CARP?

FINN, IT'S THE KIND
OF NAME THAT SOMEONE
NAMED *CHANCE* IS IN NO
POSITION TO RAG ON. HE'S OUT
THERE SOMEWHERE. SORT OF
DID THE WHOLE DISAPPEARING
THING AGAIN AFTER...

...AFTER YOU
LAID THE
SMACKDOWN ON
MAYLANDER.

SORRY.

I'M SURE FINN WILL
TURN UP AGAIN. AS FOR
ME, ALL I WANT IS TO STOP
THINKING ABOUT THIS MESS
FOR A WHILE. NO BLACK... NO
BLUE... NO MAYLANDER...
NO ANYTHING.

WHAT DO YOU
SAY, *CHANCE*? THINK
YOU CAN DISTRACT MY
ATTENTION FOR A
BIT?

SURE. I'VE BEEN GOING
THROUGH SOME TOUGH STUFF
MYSELF. LIKE, THIS WHOLE *TOM
CRUISE* SITUATION. IT'S DRIVING ME
NUTS. *TOP GUN* WAS THE REASON I
BECAME A PILOT. I MEAN, COME ON! IT
DIDN'T GET ANY BETTER THAN *MAVERICK*
AND *GOOSE*. *TOM* WAS THE MAN, BUT
NOW IT SEEMS LIKE HE'S GONE OFF
THE DEEP END...BIG TIME.

THAT'S NOT
WHAT I MEANT. YOU
KNOW, FOR A PILOT, YOU
AREN'T THAT GOOD WITH
READING SIGNALS.

I'LL
WORK ON IT.

SO, SHOULD I
TAKE YOU TO BED
OR LOSE YOU
FOREVER NOW?

HA HA HA HA

END

EPILOGUE.



BIRANHA... DO YOU HAVE IT?

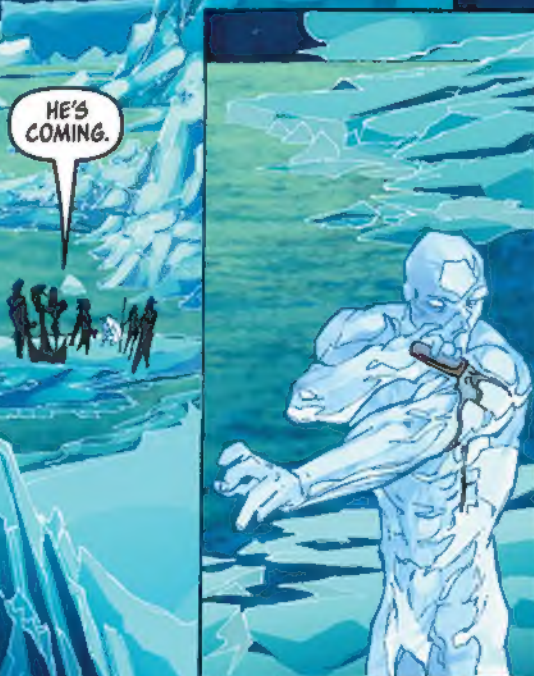
OF COURSE.

IT'S THE ENTIRE SAMPLE THAT THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT COLLECTED*. DO YOU THINK IT'S ENOUGH?

*SEE THE CANNON HAWKE MINI-SERIES FOR MORE DETAILS!



WE'LL SEE...



HE'S COMING.



NNNNNN. LNNNNNN.



WHAT'S HAPPENING?



KILLIAN...
HERE, LET ME
HELP YOU.

I DO NOT
NEED HELP,
BIRANHA.

FOR THE FIRST
TIME IN A LONG
WHILE, I'M STARTING
TO FEEL LIKE
MYSELF AGAIN.

